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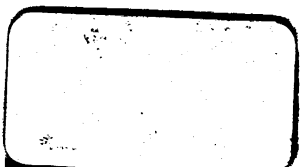
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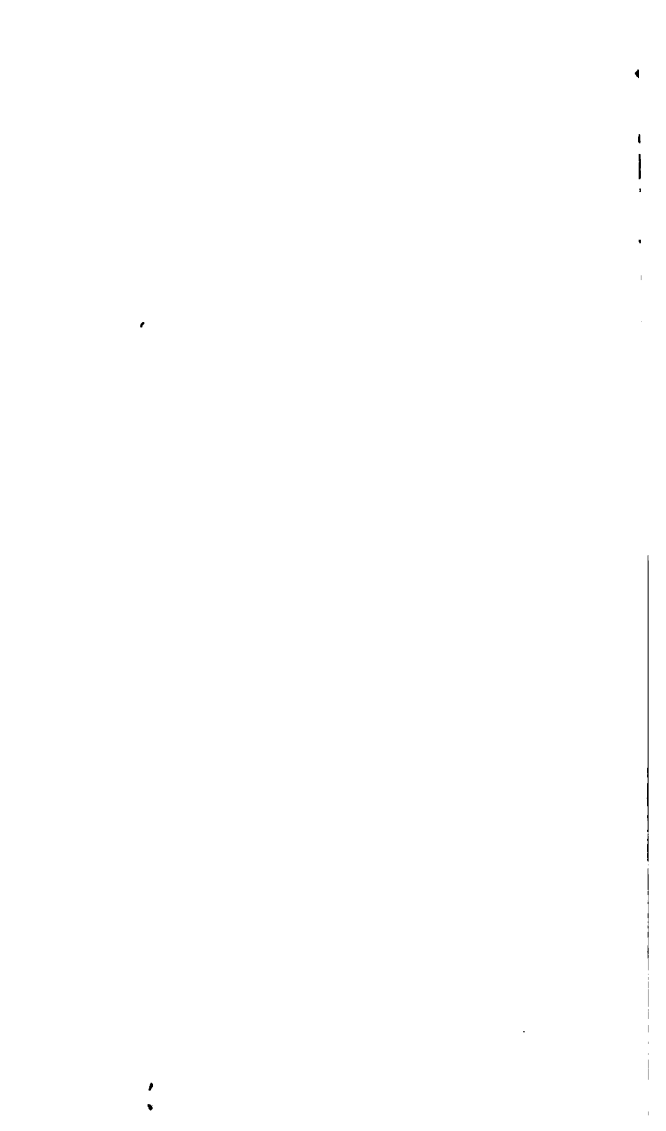
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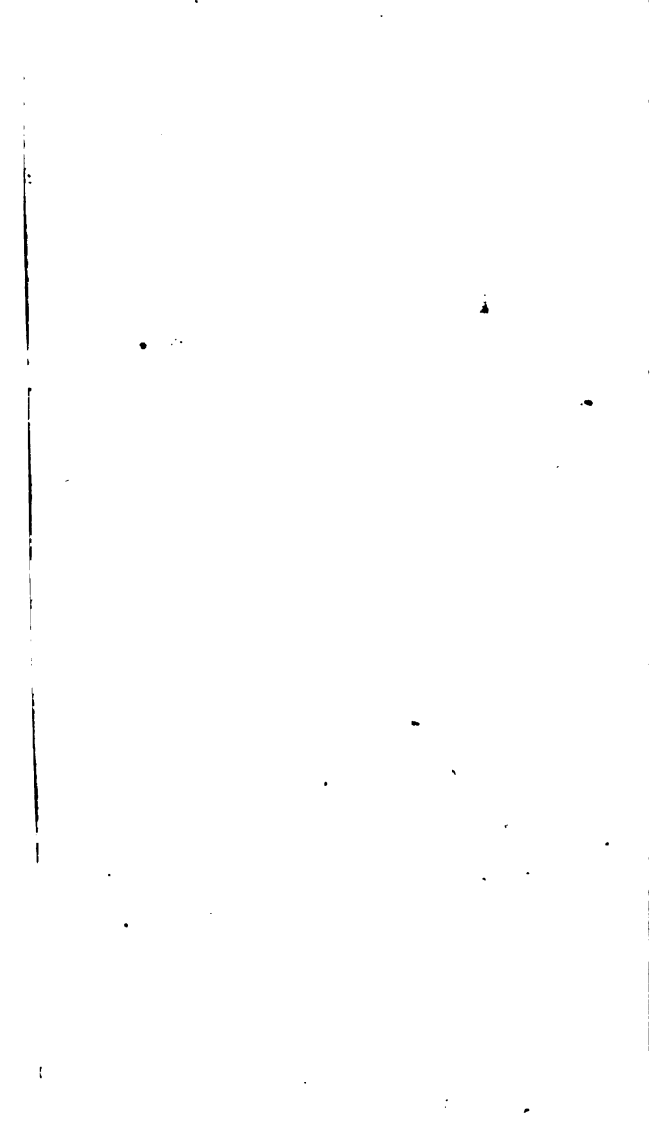
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—
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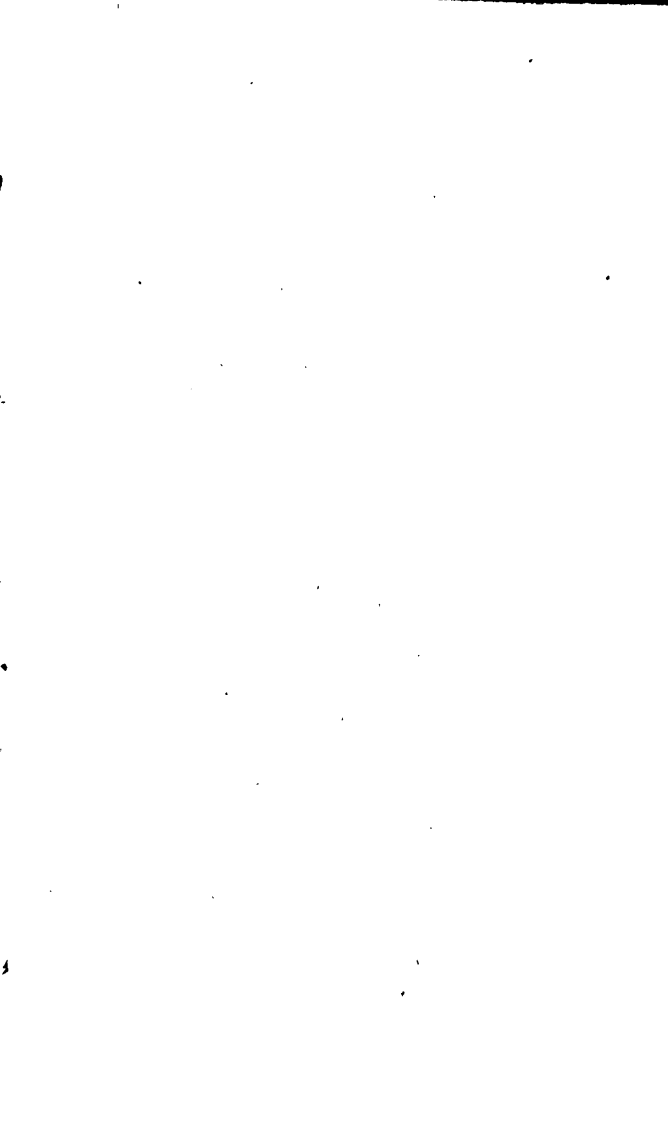
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JANUARY.

ON a fine, clear, new year's morning, a happy family assembled around the breakfast-table. The residence of Mr. Milton was at a considerable distance from a large town, and every thing out of doors was covered with snow. But bright eyes, and kind hearts, and cheerful fires within, deprived the country of all its solitude, and winter of every thing disagreeable. The evening before, the young people, in imitation of a German custom, had written a number of wishes on small scraps of paper. Of these, each of the family had taken three, and after they had been deposited with care under the pillow, to be dreamt on, they were now produced at the breakfast-table. Each person drew one from his bundle, and this scrap was to be prophetic of his fate for the year. Some of these consisted of the simple good wishes customary at this season; others, of some particular gift, adapted to the wants of the receiver; and some, of a more

refined character, were clothed in poetry. Mr. Milton received the following :—

——— “ A clear and competent estate,
Enough for every comfort, but not great ;
As much as you can comfortably spend ;
A little more, sometimes, t’ oblige a friend.”

This was pronounced a very good wish by the whole company ; and, Mrs. Milton being desired next to read hers, it proved to be the following :—

“ He, good to all, who good deserve, shall give
Thy flock to feed, and thee at ease to live.”

George, who was of a studious temperament, was not ill pleased to find his paper contained the following lines :—

——— “ A silent study, placed
Fitly, with all the noblest authors graced :
For sure no minutes bring us more content
Than those in peaceful, useful studies spent.”

Cousin Grace, who lived in the city, but was now enjoying her visit in the country highly, notwithstanding the season, found her wish expressed in this manner :—

“ Gay hope be yours, by fancy led,
Less pleasing when possessed ;
The tear forgot as soon as shed,
The sunshine of the breast.”

Frank thought his motto not inappropriate, as he was of a very lively disposition, and was even sometimes, in the exuberance of his wit, a little mischievous, though always with the best intentions : —

“Be yours

Wild wit, invention ever new,
And lively cheer, of vigor born ;
The thoughtless day, the easy night ;
The spirits pure, the slumbers light,
That fly the approach of morn.”

Some of the others were considered quite as good, and after the wishes had been examined, and the breakfast despatched, the party proceeded to the drawing-room, where the new year's presents had been duly arranged on the centre-table, the evening before, by their kind father and mother. Each member of the family had made some little present, generally the fruit of his or her own ingenuity, to each of the rest ; and the father and mother had given to each one some trifling token of affection. All the previous preparations had been secret ; and the articles prepared and directed were placed in paper packages, in a large basket, and the night before arranged on the table. The opening of the papers, and examination of the gifts, produced a scene of

much hilarity, and occupied the hour until it was necessary for Mr. Milton to retire to his study, and the boys, George and Frank, to wrap themselves up and proceed to the school, or academy, as it was called, which they daily attended. The young ladies, after having spent a short time with their mother in some household duties, sat down to their daily studies, which were carried on under the direction of the mother, Mr. Milton being not unwilling to render his advice, in case of emergency, to remove the difficulties of an ode of Horace, or throw light on a dark problem in Euclid.

In diligent occupation, the hours glided quickly away, until the boys, on their return from school, rushed in, and begged the girls to come out and examine their new coast. To this proposition the young ladies made no objection; and after suitable preparations for meeting the cold weather, they all proceeded to the coast, and, in rapid slides, snowballing, and the other sports of winter, passed the hours until it was time to go into the house, and prepare for dinner. The afternoon was passed in working, reading, and conversation. Cousin Grace said she did not know what the town girls would have said, to see young la-

dies employed as they had been this morning ; but Eleanor told her that something much after the manner of coasting was at one time quite the fashion in Paris. The Russians amuse themselves with their hills of ice, built on purpose.. "I have read," said Eleanor, "that they build a high frame-work of timber, which they ascend at one end by a ladder. It is made sloping on the other side. This frame is covered with lumps of ice, squared neatly, and laid true, like a pavement of stones. Over this, water is poured, which soon freezes, and makes one compact body of ice every where. At the top of this is a sledge, like a small boat, or butcher's pung, as we call it. The person gets into this, and is put at the edge of the slope : down this he slides with so much force, as to carry him a great way on the flat ice of the river on which this hill of ice is built. He then comes to another ice-hill, which he ascends, and slides down as before ; and so on, one after another. Sometimes, it is said, boys will skait down these places on one leg, keeping their balance with great skill. The French, who had heard of and seen this Russian fashion of coasting, took a fancy to imitate it ; but as their climate is too warm to give them a sup-

ply of ice for the purpose, they build up the frame of wood, which they ascend by steps at one end, and slide down the plane by means of a sort of railroad, the little sleds being provided with wheels instead of runners. Down these the ladies and gentlemen are propelled with great rapidity. They call them the *Russian mountains*. I remember," said Eleanor, "to have seen the operation of these represented on a Parisian screen, which had a little mechanism about it to show how the sleds went down."

Cousin Grace said Eleanor's account quite reconciled her to coasting, which she was very well disposed to like for its own sake, after the agreeable trial of the sport she had had in the morning.

Mrs. Milton observed that, in the country, where young ladies had opportunity to join in active out-of-doors sports without exciting unpleasant observations, she should always recommend it to them. There was not quite so much, perhaps, to induce them to take walks for exercise as in a city, where the stone flagging, which was soon cleared after a storm, made so convenient a walk. But the girls out of town certainly had the advantage of the city girls in being able to slide and coast, and even skait, as much as they pleased.

Sophia remarked that, in passing from their coast this morning, they had seen a great many immense cart-loads of ice in the road, more, she should think, than would fill all the ice-houses for miles round; and in fact she had seen men every day, for some weeks past, employed in carting the ice in large square blocks away from the pond. She wondered what was to be done with it, and asked her father if he thought any one was going to build an ice-house, like the one George read to them about the other day, which was once made in Russia, and where the whole furniture, and even the cannon, which could fire a salute, were made of ice.

Mr. Milton told his daughter he did not think any one in this country, and at this time, would fancy such a residence, or had leisure or money to build such an edifice for curiosity; but he told her that a great deal of ice was now exported to the East Indies. A few years since, a merchant in Boston made the experiment of sending out a vessel to China with ice, and it proved so successful, that it had, he believed, now become a regular article of trade to the other side of the world, and to the southern part of America.

Mrs. Milton said this conversation reminded

her of a story of a very miserly man, who had an ice-house. At the season of the year when it was proper to fill it, his men came to him to ask him what they should do with a quantity that remained of the last year's stock. "Let it be given to the poor," said the old man.

"A load of ice, such a day as this, would be a very comfortable present!" said Frank. "I dare say the poor would be much obliged to him!"

George remarked that Benjamin Franklin was born in this month of January, which they had that day entered upon. He had been reading his life, written by himself, lately. He thought it very interesting, and, if they liked, he would try to remember what he could that was remarkable about this great man, and relate it to them.

All the party expressed their desire that he should do so. Eleanor asked what day of January was his birth-day.

George said he was born in Boston, Massachusetts, on the 17th January, in the year 1706. He very early showed an inclination for learning, and says he could not remember a time when he was unable to read. His father at first intended to educate him for a minister; but finding he could not afford it, having

a large family, he took him early from school, and employed him to assist him in his own trade of a soap-boiler ; but this was very disagreeable to Benjamin, and, after a year or two, he became apprentice to his brother as a printer. He remained with him a few years, and then, in consequence of some disputes with his brother, he left him, and went to Philadelphia. He left Boston without the knowledge of his father, having sold a part of his books to procure money for his passage, which he made in a sloop, and arrived in three days at New York, at the age of seventeen, an entire stranger, and with very little money in his pocket. Not finding employment in New York, he proceeded to Philadelphia. He went to Amboy in a boat. During the passage, they were exposed to a squall, and in great danger, but escaped, though he was quite sick after it. He walked to Burlington, finding kind people on the road, and at last found a boat, in which he reached Philadelphia. The first place he entered to rest himself was a Quaker meeting-house, where he fell sound asleep, and slept till the congregation dispersed, when some one awoke him. He soon got employment as a printer, and after being engaged thus for some time, he made a voyage to England, and worked there at his

trade a year or two; then returned to America, and, in process of time, he established for himself a printing-office. He married, in the year 1780, a Miss Read, of Philadelphia; and about this time his own history of himself, which is highly interesting, ends. But, as you all know, he was eminently successful, was frequently employed as agent for the state of Pennsylvania, and afterwards for the United States, in Europe — concluded several important treaties, and became known and celebrated for his discoveries in electricity. He died in the year 1790, at the age of eighty-four years. He left several legacies for charitable and literary purposes; among others, a fund to assist young married mechanics in the town of Boston; and another fund, the interest of which is annually expended in medals given for rewards to the best scholars in the public schools in Boston.

George remarked, he could give them no great idea of the life and character of this remarkable man; but he thought they would all like to read his life, which he should be happy to lend them, having received it, as they knew, for his new year's present, from his father, that morning.

George had but just done speaking, when the party was enlarged by the arrival of their

friend and neighbor, Dr. Solander. His visit was not the less agreeable from the fact that he bore in his hand a splendid bunch of flowers, the productions of his green-house. He was fond of bringing in occasionally to his young friends a bouquet; and the only remuneration he desired for the trouble, was, that they should examine his flowers carefully, and try to remember their names, and all that was peculiar about them. He had now several species of heath. Of this, he said, the botanical name was *Erica*; that it belonged to the 8th class, 1st order; that there were said to be 400 different kinds of it in Europe; but not one was known to be native in America, though it was now much cultivated in green-houses. Then there were geraniums of several kinds, class 16th, order 5th. Roses: These naturally belong to the 12th class; but the double roses, though very beautiful, are only considered monsters, the stamens and pistils having all run to leaves. The mignonette, (*reseda odora*), class 11th, order 3d. The orange-flower, class 18th, order 1st. Stock gilly-flowers: These are a sort of carnation; and the single ones belong to the order of cruciform plants. The myrtle, (*myrtus*), 12th class, 1st order: These,

with several others, made up a beautiful bouquet.

After due examination of the flowers, some social games and agreeable conversation ensued, and the day finished as pleasantly as it had begun.







FEBRUARY.

THE weather continued much the same as during the past month. The days had grown a little longer, but the ground was still, for the most part of the time, covered with snow. The children of Mr. Milton's family had enjoyed several pleasant sleigh-rides. Well wrapped up in cloaks and furs, and cheered by the merry sound of the bells, they had defied the cold weather. On some occasions, large sleigh-loads of boys from the city had extended their rides as far as Mr. Milton's house. Provided with large vehicles, which could contain from thirty to forty boys, drawn by four or six horses, many whole schools had united to enjoy this pastime of the season. They were accompanied by their teachers, or some person suited from age or experience to direct the party. After having ridden several miles into the country, they usually stopped at some public house, where they were regaled with hot coffee, milk, and the usual accom-

paniments, so agreeable to young people, of cakes, pies, and sweetmeats. These parties attracted the attention of people in all the towns through which they passed, by their merry shouts and gay laughter. Frequently some gaudy banner, prepared by the lads for the occasion, floated over their heads; and on one occasion, George Milton was much amused to distinguish a stanza of a song of Sir Walter Scott travestied, on the spur of the moment, in this manner:—

“Then up with the banner; let winter winds fan her;
She has waved over Jemmy five minutes or more;
In sport we'll attend her, in battle defend her,
With heart and with hand, as our fathers before.”

The girls enjoyed their share of these winter pleasures. Once or twice in the course of the winter, parties of young ladies and gentlemen rode out from the neighboring city, and passed the evening in dancing and social sports.

George and Frank, with the advice and assistance of their father, and a little aid from the laboratory of their friend Dr. Solander, succeeded in making quite a powerful electrical machine. After suffering some disappointment from its failure on the first and

second trials, which failures were kindly attributed to the damp weather, or some other cause beside want of skill in the youthful mechanics, George and Frank had the satisfaction of giving a shock to the whole family, joined in a ring, quite as powerful as any one cared to receive. After the excitement produced by this had subsided, they proceeded to perform several of the little experiments in electricity which are described in scientific dialogues, and the little machine formed an agreeable variety to their amusements for the remainder of their winter evenings.

When the family were assembled in the afternoon for their usual quiet occupations, cousin Grace said she had met with some pretty lines in looking over a book that morning, which she should like to read. After all were quietly settled, the ladies with their work, and the boys with their pencils, she began :—

*THE SNOW-DRIFT.

" On raves the hurricane, down floods the snow,
Hills whiten, the forests are groaning below ;
The river, choked up, rushes dark o'er its bed,
And the wild common criss at the traveller's tread.

" Day dies — night approaches — the common is wide ;
The traveller toils on, with no pathway to guide ;

His rough, russet doublet with snow-flakes is white,
And the shower, in its drifting, deprives him of sight.

"Say, where shall he rest from the rave of the storm,
From night and the pitiless tempest, his form?
All grim is the scowl of the sky, and all drear
The shelterless desert; no cottage is near.

"Far, far o'er the moor, by the hearth's ruddy glow,
With her youngers around, safe from storm and from
snow,
Poor Ellen sits pensive, caressing a child,
The image of him who now travels the wild.

"With grief at her heart, and a tear in her eye,
She opens her lattice and looks at the sky;
'Tis a desolate prospect; above and below
Is the darkness of night, or the paleness of snow.

"The chickens are roosted within the snug shed,
Where old Dobbin hangs his disconsolate head;
Shrill whistles the wind through each cranny; the
trees
In vain rear their shelterless boughs to the breeze.

"A step is approaching; sly Tray on the floor
Starts up from his slumbers, and smells at the door;
To the threshold the game-leaving innocents flee,
To learn, with their dog, what the matter can be.

"Lo! enters a tall shape, o'ermantled with snow,
And the dame rushes forward, impatient to know;
Ah! the look that he casts, and the word that he speaks,
Bring relief to her heart, and the blood to her cheeks.

“‘Haste, spread be the board!’ Soon the supper is set;
Round a hearthstone of rapture the household are met;
The winds they may rave, and the snows they may
beat,
But they smile at them both, from their cozy retreat.”

“That, indeed, is a very pretty story,” said Sophia, “and I like it a great deal better than some snow-storm stories I have read, which end in the poor man’s being found the next morning buried up in a snow-drift.”

“You may depend on it, cousin,” said Grace, “I should never have marked it to read over a second time, if it had been so sad in the ending. I know such things happen sometimes, and I am very sorry when I read of them in the newspaper; but I can do nothing to alleviate such sorrow, but hope that the good God, who, we are told, ‘tempers the wind to the shorn lamb,’ will comfort his poor children when they are so sadly afflicted. But when I am going to read, for my amusement, a story or a poem, I take good care never to select one that I know turns out badly, as we children say.”

Mrs. Milton told her merry niece that she did not blame her. She said she had heard of some people who liked a book the better the more it made them cry; but, as far as her experience went, she had not observed that

these people, who wasted their sympathies over imaginary sorrows, were better fitted to meet the real trials of life with fortitude, or more ready to render assistance to the afflicted, when it lay in their power, than others, who spared their feelings these imaginary sufferings.

Mr. Milton now came into the room, and said he should like to read to them some notices of the early life of General Washington, from Mr. Sparks's Life of that great man. February was the month in which Washington was born, and it was natural at this season to go back in imagination to the time when he who in after life proved indeed the father of his country, was lying a feeble infant in the arms of his mother.

George Washington was born in Westmoreland county, Virginia, on the 22d of February, 1732, being the fifth child of his father, Augustine Washington, and his eldest son by his second wife, Mary Ball. At the time of George Washington's birth, his father resided near the banks of the Potomac, in Westmoreland county; but he removed, not long afterwards, to an estate owned by him in Stafford county, on the east side of the Rappahannoc River, opposite Fredericksburg. Here he lived

till his death, which happened, after a sudden and short illness, on the 12th of April, 1743, at the age of forty-nine. Little is known of the character or acts of the father of Washington. It appears by his will, however, that he possessed a large and valuable property in lands; and as this had been acquired chiefly by his own industry and enterprise, it may be inferred that, in the concerns of business, he was methodical, skilful, and energetic. His occupation was that of a planter. He was able, though suddenly cut off in the vigor of manhood, to leave all his children in a state of comparative independence. Confiding in the prudence of his wife, he directed that the proceeds of all the property of her children should be at her disposal, till they should each come of age.

The charge of five young children, the eldest of whom was eleven years old, the care of their education, and the management of their property, demanded great resolution and strength of mind and character. In these duties Mrs. Washington acquitted herself with great fidelity to her trust, and with entire success. Her good sense, assiduity, tenderness, and vigilance, overcame every obstacle; and, as the richest reward of a mother's solicitude

and toil, she had the happiness to see all her children come forward with a fair promise into life, filling the sphere allotted to them in a manner equally honorable to themselves and to the parent who had been the only guide of their principles, conduct, and habits. She lived to witness the noble career of her eldest son, till, by his own rare merits, he was raised to the head of a nation, and applauded and revered by the whole world. It has been said that there never was a great man, the elements of whose greatness might not be traced to the original character or influence of his mother. If this be true, how much do mankind owe to the mother of Washington !

He was placed at a school where he was taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and keeping accounts. He is said to have been inquisitive, docile, and diligent. When he was a boy, he was very fond of active sports. He was accustomed to form his schoolmates into companies ; and with them he paraded, marched, and fought mimic battles. He was always the commander of one of the parties. He was fond of running, jumping, wrestling, tossing bars, and other feats of agility and bodily exercise. These practices were continued by him after he had arrived at the age of mature

life. While at school, his conduct and probity were such as to win the deference of other boys, who were accustomed to make him the judge in their disputes, and never failed to be satisfied with his judgment.

In some branches of study he was early a proficient. His manuscript school-books, from the time he was thirteen years old, have been preserved. He had already mastered the difficult parts of arithmetic, and these books begin with geometry. But there is one, of a previous date, which deserves notice. Many pages of this book are taken up with copies of what he calls Forms of Writing, such as notes of hand, bills of exchange, and other business papers, written out in a large hand. He also compiled a system of maxims, called Rules of Behavior and Conduct in Company and Conversation. Some of these are unimportant, and suited only to form the habits of a child: others are of a higher import, fitted to soften and polish the manners, to keep alive the best affections, and to inculcate the practice of perfect self-control.

He left school in the autumn preceding his sixteenth birth-day. The last two years had been devoted to the study of geometry, trigonometry, and surveying, for which he had a

great fondness. During the last summer he was at school, he surveyed the fields round the school-house, and in the adjoining plantations, of which the boundaries and measurements are carefully entered in his books. After leaving school, he was employed in surveying. He was appointed adjutant-general of one of the military districts in Virginia. At one time he was sent by the governor across the Alleghanies to obtain some information about the French. The journey was long and tedious, and in the course of it the adventure took place which is related in the following manner. He was then about the age of 24.

At Venango, the horses were found in so emaciated and pitiable a condition, that it was doubtful whether they would perform the journey. The baggage and provisions were all to be transported on their backs. To lighten their burthen as much as possible, Major Washington, clad in an Indian walking dress, determined to proceed on foot, with Mr. Gist and Mr. Van Braam, putting the horses under the direction of the drivers. After three days' travel, the horses becoming more feeble, and the cold and snow hourly increasing, this mode of journeying proved so tardy and dis-

encouraging, that another was resorted to. Mr. Van Braam took charge of the horses, with orders to go on as fast as he could. Major Washington, with a knapsack on his back, containing his papers and food, and with a gun in his hand, left the party, accompanied only by Mr. Gist, equipped in the same manner. They turned out of the path, and directed their course through the woods, so as to strike the Alleghany River, and cross it, near Shannopin's Town, two or three miles above the fork of the Ohio. The next day an adventure occurred, which is well narrated by Mr. Gist, in a diary written by him at the time.

"We rose early in the morning, and set out about two o'clock, and got to the Murdering Town on the south-east fork of Beaver Creek. Here we met with an Indian, whom I thought I had seen at Joncairés, at Venango, when on our journey up to the French fort. This fellow called me by my Indian name, and pretended to be glad to see me. He asked us several questions, as, how we came to travel on foot, when we left Venango, where we parted with our horses, and when they would be there. Major Washington insisted on travelling by the nearest way to the forks of the Alle-

ghany. We asked the Indian if he could go with us, and show us the nearest way. The Indian seemed very glad, and ready to go with us; upon which we set out, and the Indian took the major's pack. We travelled very brisk, for eight or ten miles, when the major's feet grew very sore, and he very weary, and the Indian steered too much north-eastwardly. The major desired to encamp; upon which the Indian asked to carry his gun, but he refused; and then the Indian grew churlish, and pressed us to keep on, telling us there were Ottawa Indians in those woods, and they would scalp us if we lay out; but go to his cabin, and we should be safe.

"I thought very ill of the fellow, but did not care to let the major know I mistrusted him. But he soon mistrusted him as much as I did. The Indian said he could hear a gun from his cabin, and steered us more northwardly. We grew uneasy, and then he said two whoops might be heard from his cabin. We went two miles farther. Then the major said he would stay at the next water, and we desired the Indian to stop at the next water; but before we came to water, we came to a clear meadow. It was very light, and snow was on the ground. The Indian made a stop, and turned about.

The major saw him point his gun toward us, and he fired. Said the major, 'Are you shot?' 'No,' said I; upon which the Indian ran forward to a big standing white oak, and began loading his gun, but we were soon with him. I would have killed him, but the major would not suffer me. We let him charge his gun. We found he put in ball; then we took care of him. Either the major or I always stood by the guns. We made him make a fire for us, by a little run, as if we intended to sleep there. I said to the major, 'As you will not have him killed, we must get him away, and then we must travel all night;' upon which I said to the Indian, 'I suppose you were lost, and fired your gun.' He said he knew the way to his cabin, and it was but a little way. 'Well,' said I, 'do you go home; and, as we are tired, we will follow your track in the morning; and here is a cake of bread for you, and you must give us meat in the morning.' He was glad to get away. I followed him, and listened till he was fairly out of the way; and then we went about half a mile, when we made a fire, set our compass, fixed our course, and travelled all night. In the morning we were on the head of Piny Creek."

Whether it was the intention of the Indian to kill either of them, can only be conjectured. The circumstances were extremely suspicious. Major Washington hints at this incident in his journal. "We fell in with a party of French Indians," says he, "who had lain in wait for us. One of them fired at Mr. Gist or me, not fifteen steps off, but fortunately missed. We took the fellow in custody, and kept him till nine o'clock at night; then let him go, and walked all the remaining part of the night, without making any stop, that we might get the start so far as to be out of the reach of their pursuit the next day, since we were well assured they would follow our track, as soon as it was light." No more was seen or heard of them.

"The book is full of interest," said Mr. Milton, "and when you are old enough, you will delight to follow, step by step, this great man, who seems to have been chosen and placed, by Divine Providence, in exactly the circumstances which were best fitted to prepare him for the great part he was to take in the future destiny of his country and the world."

Little Frank, who had listened quite atten-

tively to the conversation and reading, now started up, and said he had something funny to tell. "At our school, said he, "is John Laidlaw, and it happens he was born in a leap year, and on the 29th day of February, so that he cannot have a *real* birth-day but once in four years."

They were all amused at this odd circumstance, and afterward agreed, in speaking of the number of days in the different months, that it would be much more difficult to remember the length of each, if every one had not at his tongue's end the old lines,

Thirty days hath September,
April, June, and November.
All the rest have thirty-one,
Except February alone;
And when leap year is the time,
February has twenty-nine.

Dr. Solander now came in with his fine bunch of flowers. But he was still obliged to draw from his green-house; and there was little difference between these and the bouquet for January. The doctor told his young friends he could not teach them much botany from these flowers, which were so much influenced by the art of the gardener. When

the spring opened, he hoped to join them in walks into the woods, where they would find the flowers in the simple state of nature, and he should be able to tell them more of their form and character. The brilliant roses, heaths, stocks, geraniums, myrtles, and other productions of the gardener, were not, however, slighted by the less scientific part of the company, but placed in a vase in the middle of the table, that all might enjoy their beauties, and inhale their delicious fragrance.







MARCH.

THE weather still continued cold, with high winds and hard frosts; but the Milton family were able to give some variety to their out-of-door exercise. In the middle of the day, the sun was so powerful, that the weather gained considerable warmth, and they found rides on horseback were very healthful and agreeable. The snows melted on the hills, and swelled the small streams, which came rushing down with great force, forming splendid waterfalls as they found their way over the rocks, and hastened down to fill up the rivers. The streams were all much increased, and many bridges and dams were carried away. Though they could not but regret the loss and damage which some of their neighbors suffered on these occasions, the spectacle of these torrents was often very magnificent and imposing. On one occasion, the ice in the river broke up, and came down with such force as to undermine

some parts of a bridge, which crossed a river near the house of Mr. Milton. For several hours, the inhabitants of the town were assembled in great numbers, to watch it; and at last it came, the mighty torrent, bearing along immense blocks of ice, which it forced against the bridge, and with a great crash it yielded, and the large masses of the timber which composed it were hurried down the stream. — In the afternoon, many anecdotes were told of these freshets, as they are called, and it was mentioned that in some places the bridges had been carried away several times, before a method of building could be discovered sufficiently strong to resist these spring torrents.

“Father,” said Frank, “I believe this is the month when maple sugar is made; can you tell us any thing about it?”

FATHER. “The maple sugar is made from a tree, called *acer saccharinum*, or sugar maple. It grows in many parts of the United States, though not near the seashore. A tree of common size will yield from twenty to thirty gallons of sap in a season. This sap is collected by boring holes in the trees, and fastening to them small troughs, which convey it into vessels made to receive it. It is then put into

large kettles, and boiled down, until it forms itself into grains. This is the raw sugar. There are various ways of purifying and bleaching it."

SOPHIA. "In Mr. Cooper's story of the *Pioneers* is an amusing description of a visit to a *sugar bush*, as he calls it, of which I will read some parts, if you please."

All the party expressed a desire to hear her extracts, and she very good-humoredly tripped off to the library, to find the book. She thought the whole chapter would not interest those unacquainted with the story; she therefore only read such parts as she thought most to the point.

"It was at the close of the month of March that the sheriff succeeded in persuading his cousin and her young friend to accompany him in a ride; 'and, cousin Bess,' said he, 'we will stop and see the sugar bush of Billy Kirby.' They rode until they reached an open wood on the summit of the mountain, where the hemlocks and pines totally disappeared, and a grove of sugar maples covered the earth with their tall straight trunks and spreading branches, in stately pride. The underwood had been entirely removed from

this grove, or bush, as, in conjunction with the simple arrangements for boiling, it was called, and a wide space of many acres was cleared, which might be likened to the dome of a mighty temple, to which the maples, with their stems, formed the columns, their tops composing the capitals, and the heavens the arch. A deep and careless incision had been made into each tree, near the root, into which little spouts, formed of the bark of the alder or the sumach were fastened; and a trough, roughly dug out of the linden or bass-wood, was lying at the root of each tree, to catch the sap that flowed from this extremely wasteful and inartificial arrangement.

“The party paused a moment, on gaining the flat, to breathe their horses, and as the scene was entirely new to several of their number, to view the manner of collecting the fluid. A fine, powerful voice aroused them from their momentary silence, as it rung under the branches of the trees, singing the following words of that inimitable doggerel, whose verses, if extended, would reach from the waters of the Connecticut to the shores of Ontario. The tune was, of course, Yankee Doodle.

'The Eastern States be full of men,
The Western full of woods, sir,
The hills be like a cattle-pen,
The roads be full of goods, sir.

'Then flow away, my sweet sap,
And I will make you boily,
Nor catch a woodman's hasty nap,
For fear you should grow roily.

'The maple tree's a precious one —
'Tis fuel, food, and timber;
And when your stiff day's work is done,
Its juice will make you limber.

'Then flow away, &c.

'And what's a man without his glass,
His wife without her tea, sir?
But neither cup nor mug will pass
Without this honey bee, sir.

'Then flow away, my sweet sap,
And I will make you boily,
Nor catch a woodman's hasty nap,
For fear you should grow roily.'

"The Frenchman approached the place where Kirby had deposited his cakes of sugar, under the cover of a bark roof, and commenced the examination of the article with the eye of one who well understood its value. Marmaduke had dismounted, and was viewing the works and trees very closely, and not without frequent expressions of dissatisfaction at the

careless manner in which the manufacture was conducted.

“‘You have much experience in these things, Kirby,’ he said. ‘What is the course you pursue in making your sugar? I see that you have but two kettles.’

“‘Two is as good as a thousand, judge. I’m none of your polite sugar-makers, that boils for the great folks; but if the raal sweet maple is wanted, I can answer your turn. First, I choose, and then I tap my trees; say, along about the last of February, or, in these mountains, maybe not afore the middle of March; but any way, just as the sap begins cleverly to run. I never put my axe into a stunty tree, or one that has not a good fresh-looking bark. Well, when the sap begins to get a free run, I hang over the kettles, and set up the bush. My first boiling I push pretty smart, till I get the good of the sap, but when it begins to grow like molasses, like this in the kettle here, one musn’t drive the fires too hard, or you’ll burn the sugar; and burny sugar is always bad to the taste, let it be never so sweet. So you ladle out from one kettle into the other, till it gets so, when you put the stirring stick into it, that it will draw into a thread, when it takes a

careful hand to manage it. There is a way to drain it off, after it has grained, by putting clay into the pans, but it is not always practised: some does, some does not.'"

"Is this a true account of sugar-making?" said Frank. "Is it a true story it is taken from?"

MR. MILTON. "The book it is taken from is not true, but is a story-book written to amuse great people, something in the way children's story-books are made to amuse little people: but this account of sugar-making, I believe, is pretty correct — at least as it was practised some years ago. I presume there have been improvements in the method, of late, though I do not know of any. At any rate, we are all very fond of the nice little cakes of the sugar, which we sometimes receive from our cousins, who live at the western part of the state."

In the course of conversation in the afternoon of a day in this month, some one spoke of the Boston massacre as having happened on the 5th of March, and George requested permission to read a little account of this event: —

"This day, in the year 1770, was marked

by an event of more horror than any which had yet befallen the inhabitants of Boston. The massacre which then occurred, originated in a slight affray between three or four young men and a soldier, who was stationed as sentinel by a little alley which led to the barracks of the 14th regiment. The main guard of the troops was stationed opposite the town-house, and to this place they were all marched daily. A mob had been collected by the rencounter with the sentinel, and were ready for an attack even on the armed soldiers. They shouted for the main guard, and soon found their way to the neighborhood of their station. One party found a single sentinel standing before the door of the custom-house, which was situated in what is now called State Street. It was a clear moonlight night, and there was some snow on the ground. As the mob approached, the sentinel retired to the door of the house, and knocked three or four times to apprise those within of the danger. Word was soon sent to the lieutenant of the main guard, of the expected assault, and he despatched a sergeant with six men to the relief of the sentinel. Captain Preston immediately followed them. The party formed

in a semicircle about the steps of the custom-house. Mr. Knox, a bookseller, and afterwards a famous general of the revolution, went from the guard-house with Preston, having his hand on his shoulder all the way down, and warning him of the consequences of firing upon the mob. By this time, all the bells were ringing, and people were collected from every quarter to ascertain what was going on. They pressed and crowded upon the soldiers, and some attacked them with pieces of snow and ice, and clubs, while from all sides were shouts of 'Fire, fire, if you dare!'

"The soldiers at length began to fire, and three of the citizens were killed on the spot. Two others were mortally wounded, and several were considerably injured. A cry was soon raised through the town, of 'To arms, to arms! turn out with your guns!' and the drums were beating, and bells ringing in all directions. The king's council immediately assembled, and the people were assured that Captain Preston and his men should be delivered to the magistrates. The funeral of the slain was attended with great ceremony, and by an immense multitude. The shops were closed, and all the bells were tolled in Boston

and the neighboring towns. The procession formed in King (now State) Street, and marched through the town to the burial-ground, where the bodies were deposited in one grave. In the course of a few days, all the troops were removed to the castle. Captain Preston was tried and acquitted. The soldiers were soon after tried. They were defended by John Adams and Josiah Quincy, jr. Two were convicted of manslaughter, and the other six were acquitted. These acquittals were highly creditable to the citizens of the town. But even in the midst of deep excitement and indignation, they were governed only by the strictest sense of duty and justice. For several years after, the anniversary of this day was noticed in Boston with great solemnity; the churches were hung with black, the bells were tolled, and an oration on the subject pronounced by some distinguished orator."

George had but just finished his reading, and a few remarks had been made upon the subject, when Dr. Solander came in with his bouquet. He regretted that he could still bring them nothing but the productions of the greenhouse; but these were so beautiful, that the young ladies thought there was nothing to be

sorry for. In addition to a good supply of monthly roses and geraniums, he had the *Amaryllis Formosissima*, Jacob's lily, (class 6th, order 1st,) towering up with its splendid red petals, which seemed, when turned to the light, to be sprinkled with powdered diamonds; abundance of hyacinths of various colors, (*Hyacinthus*, class 6th, order 2d;) the cheerful little *Auricula*, (class 5th, order 1st.) He had also the *Camellia Japonica*, Japan rose, (class 16th, order 6th.) He remarked that the plant from which these specimens were taken had flowered rather late in his green-house this year: it is usually in bloom through the winter, and furnishes the city belles with a most beautiful ornament for their evening dress through the fashionable visiting season. The children were surprised to learn, from their friend the doctor, that the tea which is brought from China, and is in so much use for an afternoon beverage, belongs to this family of plants.

It was named in honor of George Camellus, a Catholic priest, and the author of some learned works. The Bohea tea is called *Camellia Bohea*; the Green, *Camellia Viridis*. These are both evergreen shrubs, natives of China, growing to a height of about four feet.

The tea districts in China extend from the twenty-seventh to the thirty-fifth degree of north latitude. The third year after planting, the leaves are gathered in three successive crops, in the months of February, April, and June. The first picking forms what the merchants call Imperial Tea, and the second and third, the kinds known under the names of Green, Black, and Bohea Teas.

The *Camellia Japonica* of the green-houses belongs to this family. In the gardens and groves of Japan, some of its species grow to the size of trees, and, with their polished deep green leaves, their fine forms, and their elegant white or red flowers, double or single, form one of the most splendid objects in the vegetable kingdom.







APRIL.

By degrees, the sun, which had now become much more powerful, melted away the snow, the weather became milder, and April took the place of cold, blustering, chilly March. The farmers began to plough up the ground, preparatory to planting. Mr. Milton's family enjoyed very much the return of spring. The morning dawned brightly; the sun shone out powerfully; the air was soft and sweet as summer; the windows were thrown open, and the children sallied forth. Frank soon ran himself into a great heat, and returned to the house, begging his mother to get out his summer clothes. He was sure it never was such a hot morning before, and never would be cold again. He thought it must be really unhealthy, and he was sure it was too bad for a fellow to be obliged to carry round his thick winter dress in summer time. His mother, who remembered the last April, and those which had gone before, better than he

did, begged him to be patient. She did not dare take off his winter dress quite so suddenly, and perhaps before night he would not feel it too thick. Frank, who was really a sensible boy, though a little impatient, took her advice, chose a shady corner of the piazza, and seated himself quietly down to read Keeper's Travels in Search of his Master. This occupation tended to make the weather seem cooler, and the time passed quickly until the hour for school. He then laid away his Keeper, took his satchel, and marched off, accompanied by his brother George. They reached school safely after a pleasant walk, which was enlivened by the songs of the birds. The robins were in great numbers chirping about. They seemed to be talking over the events of the winter. Some of them probably told their companions how they thought, last winter, that they would not go away to seek a warmer climate, but would stay about this spot, and see if they could not pick up crumbs and seeds enough to maintain them through the winter. But it became very cold: some of their most hardy friends died near them. The snow fell, and they had barely time, by using their wings with all the skill in their power, to reach in season a warm

region ; and they had resolved never again to attempt to pass the winter in this cold climate. Others congratulated themselves on having been very diligent and successful in rearing their last summer's brood, and having early in the autumn got through their summer's work. They were therefore ready to take an early flight. They had observed carefully the sky, and their instinct told them that the winter was to begin early. They had some conversation with a flock of wild geese, as they flew over ; and the geese, who were always considered very wise about the weather, told them that birds who wished to avoid a chill, had better be on their way south as soon as possible. For these reasons they had taken flight early, had been able to make their passage leisurely, had found much to amuse them on their travels, and at last reached their winter quarters safely. They had spent the cold months very agreeably, and were now ready to set about their summer work again. Frank and George, of course, did not hear them say all this ; but they heard a great chirping, and Frank felt almost certain that some of these birds were the very same whose motions he watched the last spring. Beside the robins, they saw occasionally blackbirds

and sparrows; but they had not yet arrived in very great numbers, though Frank thought it was high time they were all about their nests, as he was very sure the winter was all over. He was obliged, however, to change his opinion, for when school was done, and they set out on their return home, they found the sky, which was so clear in the morning, had become clouded over; the wind was chilly and raw. They were glad to button up their jackets, and run along pretty briskly to keep themselves warm, and before they reached home, scattering flakes of snow began to fall, and dinner was hardly finished when the ground was all white with snow. They were glad to see a bright fire rekindled in the grate. "Dear me," said Frank, "here is an end to all our fun. I had determined to work in the garden all the afternoon, and I thought we should not have any more winter. This tiresome snow will kill all my snow-drops and crocuses, and I really do believe we shall never have any summer at all."—"Do not be uneasy, my dear boy," said his father: "all in good time: these late snows are said to be very beneficial to the ground. There is a common saying that 'Spring snow is the poor man's manure.' A few hours' hot sun will

melt it away. It will sink softly into the ground. Your snow-drops and crocuses will not mind it a bit, but look all the brighter for it; and I dare say to-morrow you will be able to work in your garden. In the mean time we will try to get along in the house as well as we can. And, now, pray tell me how you succeeded at school this morning.”—“O, very well, papa,” said Frank. “I knew my lesson, having studied it thoroughly yesterday afternoon; so I recited it without any mistake; but when we went out at the recess, there was a great deal of noise and confusion in the playground. Some of the boys were provided with large pieces of chalk, with which they marked the jackets of their neighbors, to make April-fools of them. I think this is a provoking and silly custom. Do you know what is the origin of it, papa?”

MR. MILTON. “I cannot tell, indeed. I have heard it said that it arose from the fact, that our Savior was sent from Pilate to Herod, and then by him back again. This happened at Easter, which is a marked period of the church, and which comes the first of April. So that to send any one on a useless business, or fool’s errand, or to make him ridiculous in any way, came to be considered as proper to

this season. This account does not seem to me to be very probable, however. I saw, some years since, in a magazine, the journal of a man who tried to practise this sort of joke. It was rather amusing, and, if you please, Frank, you shall read it aloud. The custom seems now to have fallen pretty much into disuse, except with boys, and those generally of the younger and sillier class, who cannot invent any thing more amusing than to write APRIL FOOL about on the fences and the jackets of their playmates. Having got so low, there is reason to hope that it will in time be discontinued entirely. But now, Frank, if you please, we will listen to the journal. Frank read as follows:—

“JOURNAL OF THE FIRST OF APRIL.

“8, A. M. Looked out of bedroom window into the street, and called “Sweep!” to a boy with a soot-bag. Saw him stop, look about him, and walk on. I called him three times in the same way. Tried a fourth, and popped my head out at the wrong moment. The boy, in a passion, threw a turnip, which broke a square of glass, worth a dollar, and woke my

wife. Declared I knew nothing about it, and sneaked down to breakfast.

"9, A. M. Went to table-drawer, and slyly pocketed three little lumps of alabaster. Returned and took my seat at breakfast-table, as if nothing had happened. Put alabaster at top of blue sugar basin, and, to my great delight, saw Kitty put one into each of the children's cups. Children hammered and punched, and wondered sugar would ~~not~~ melt. Thought I should have died. Three of my best silver spoons bent as crooked as rams' horns. Very demure when Mrs. Gander came down to breakfast. Never attack wife. (Harpooners have some reason for not meddling with a certain species of whale, as being too fierce. So says Guthrie's Grammar.)

"10, A. M. Went behind counter to serve. Asked Jack Mitten, my foreman, if any body had blacked his face. Jack answered, 'Not to my knowledge,' and went to looking-glass. I replied, 'Nor to mine either.' Laughed very much, but Jack did not see much in it. Sam Snaffle, the driver of the omnibus, looked in to see what places were booked. Told him a lady, to take up from house in Washington Place, Fort Hill. Saw him set off, one short. Thought I should have died.

"11, A. M. Attending in' shop. Saw Jack Mitten serving a lady with a red elastic purse at the other counter. Took up a newspaper, and read, loud enough for her to hear, ' Dreadful depravity. An Irish fruit-woman in Broad Street scraped her child to death with an oyster-shell." Lady screamed, and went into hysterics. Gave her a glass of water, and told her it was a shame that oyster-shells were suffered to lie about the streets. Thought I never should have done laughing. •

"12, M. Sent Molly to the Common to see a live Radical. Told her to buy me a straight hook in her way home, at Peter Pullgills in Crooked Lane. Told her I should want a glass inkhorn, and that a male mermaid was expected to be seen off Charlestown Bridge at two. Wife overheard, and called me an old fool. Did not see much in it; but Molly laughed.

"1, P. M. Asked Jack Mitten who was the father of the sons of Noah; where Moses was when the candle was blown out; and which was most, half a dozen dozen, or six dozen dozen. The poor fellow could not answer one of them. Took the steps, climbed up slyly to the clock, and pushed the hands two hours forward. Heard wife, who caught a glance of

it, rail at the cook for not putting down the leg of mutton, telling her it wanted only an hour of dinner-time. Clock struck a hundred and one. Found I had done mischief, and stole away to Bond to get him to repair it.

"Took a turn on 'Change. Stepped into a broker's office. Buzz asked me to hold his umbrella while he went to sell some stock. Dropped two handfuls of saw-dust into his umbrella. On his return walked out with him. Luckily rained hard. Buzz flung open his umbrella over his head, and covered himself with saw-dust. This made me laugh till I cried. Buzz threw back a handful of saw-dust into my left eye. This made me cry till I laughed.

"3, P. M. Dinner. Asked Jack Mitten to take a glass of sherry. Poked the vinegar cruets into his hand. Made him sputter. Declared it was all his own doing, and for once got believed. Noise at the front-door. Sam Snaffle in a fine taking at my hoax in the morning. Vowed he would not leave the house till I had paid him for the one inside; paid him a quarter of a dollar, and as he threatened to 'bring me up,' gave him another quarter to drink my health.

"5, P. M. Visit from bobbing waiter at

City Tavern. 'I have brought your bill, sir.' — 'What bill?' — 'Mr. Jolter and Mr. Scraggs, sir, the gentlemen you April-fooled this morning, met, and compared notes, sir; knew your hand; went to the City Tavern, sir; ordered the dinner your note mentioned, sir; leg of mutton and roast ducks for two, sir, — and told me to bring you the bill, sir.' Swore I would not pay it. Looked out of the window, and saw Jolter and Scraggs walking up and down the street flourishing their horsewhips. Set it down for no joke, and told waiter to call tomorrow for his money.

"6, P. M. Tea and toast. Determined to play the fool no more, not quite liking the expense. Put on my slippers. Made a leg arm-chair for little Nancy. Wife busy reading Mrs. Child's Frugal Housewife; Letitia, the last new novel, with her feet up on the sofa. Door-bell rings violently. Rattle and slap of carriage-steps heard; rustling of a silk gown in the entry. Little Nancy peeps over the stair-case; comes back to announce Mrs. Frederick Alltheton. General scramble to hide objectionables; table-draw crowded; Letitia's feet placed perpendicular; wife's face coated with smiles; parlor door opened; enter Mrs. Alltheton.

"7, P. M. Bows and smiles ; explanations ; found we had been hoaxed. Card in wife's name inviting Mrs. Alltheton, apologizing for such slight notice, but Mr. Bochsa and his harp could be had on no other evening. Suspected neighbor Arrowroot, and vowed to be even with him this day twelvemonth.

"8, P. M. Music. Mrs. Alltheton and Letitia went through the regular routine. Mrs. A. protested she had no voice, and Letitia only wished she had half as good a one. Letitia vowed she could not finger a note ; and Mrs. Alltheton said if she could only play a quarter as well, she should think herself a finished performer. Preliminaries thus adjusted, both sat down together, and thumped the music of *Somnambula* till the poor piano trembled on its legs, and I nodded in my chair.

"9 and 10, P. M. Whist and scandal. Door-bell rings ; another rattle and slap of carriage-steps announced the arrival of Mrs. Alltheton's equipage. Bows and courtesies ; shawls, simpers, and ceremonious exit, Mrs. Alltheton vowing, with a yawn, that she had never passed a pleasanter evening.

"11, P. M. Bed candles. One made by me, consisting of a round pole of cut turnip, tipped with charcoal, unluckily selected by

my wife. Much poking with snuffers before trick detected. Glance of vengeance. Exit wife up stairs, husband following.

"12, P. M. Listened to curtain lecture fifty-nine minutes, and then fell asleep."

The children were considerably amused with this account of poor Mr. Gander's experiences. Their mother said she thought April fool tricks were apt to end in turning the laugh on the one who played them off.

George, who was reading American history, remarked, that April was made celebrated by having been the month in which the battles of Concord and Lexington were fought. A party of British soldiers was sent out on the 18th of that month, in the year 1775, to destroy the military stores which had been collected at Concord, about eighteen miles from Boston. When they reached Lexington, six miles distant from Concord, they were met by a company of American militia, who had assembled from the neighboring towns. The British advanced at a quick step, and the commander ordered the Americans to disperse. As there were not enough people gathered to make it prudent to fight, they did not attempt a battle; but while they were dispersing, the British

fired and killed several of the party. They then marched on to Concord, where they destroyed a few articles of military stores, and sixty barrels of flour. The militia now had collected in considerable numbers. Made angry at the loss of their companions, they made a bold and furious attack upon the enemy, and drove them back to Lexington. Hearing of the situation of his troops, General Gage sent a large reenforcement, with two field-pieces, to their assistance. The united forces amounted to about eighteen hundred men. In their hurried retreat, the regular troops were pursued with the greatest activity. From the cover of trees and stone walls, the farmers were able to thin the ranks of the enemy with great success. The situation of the king's forces through the day was extremely hazardous, and it is wonderful that so many escaped. Worn down with fatigue, and almost exhausted, they reached Charlestown about seven in the evening, with the loss of two hundred and seventy-three men killed, wounded, and taken prisoners. The next day they entered Boston. This was the commencement of hostilities. An obelisk of granite has been erected at Concord in commemoration of this event.

Cousin Grace said she had discovered Elea

nor writing some lines this morning, which she really thought ought to be read to the family. Eleanor blushed, and protested they were not good for any thing; she had only thought to turn Frank's groanings into rhyme, that she might make him laugh, and she did not think she had succeeded very well. They all insisted, however, on hearing the lines, and cousin Grace produced and read them.

“ RHYMES FOR APRIL.

- “ I welcome thee, April, at last,
Thou season of showers and of fools!
When the weather grows hot very fast,
And then quite as suddenly cools ; —
- “ When, if out in the morning you stroll,
With your new summer dress just put on,
The thunder you soon may hear roll,
And the shower make you rapidly run.
- “ The snow-drop peeps up from the ground,
In the morning so bright and so clear ;
And the crocus espies, looking round,
And cries, ‘ Welcome, my friend ! Are you
here ?
- “ ‘ I am glad that the winter is done,
That the snow has at last gone away,
That we feel the warm rays of the sun,
Inviting us up to the day ; —

“ ‘For the way which our winters we spend,
In our bulbs’ narrow case tightly bound,
Though it turns out all right in the end,
Is apt rather dull to be found.’

“ But while thus rejoices the flower,
As she looks on her neighbors around,
Like enough, comes a gale and a shower,
And bends her quite down to the ground.

“ And while twisted and turned on her stalk,
And draggled and spoiled by the rain,
She wishes, for all her gay talk,
She were under the warm sod again.

“ But these sad mishaps soon are o’er ;
The crocus will start up again,
The snow-drop look neat as before,
And grow strong and bright after the rain.

“ No matter if stopped in your walk,
If the weather change oft through the day,
Or the flower is bowed down on its stalk ; —
April showers will bring forth flowers of May.”

Dr. Solander had entered the room quietly, in time to hear the verses cousin Grace was reading ; and, on being informed that they were the production of his friend Eleanor, he presented her with what he said he considered more beautiful than any thing in his green-

house. In a warm, sunny nook, he had found this morning a darling little anemone — the *Hepatica Triloba*; class 16, order 6th. This delicate little white flower was welcomed by the whole party with the greatest joy, not only for its own beauty, but as being the first production of spring, and a promise of the pleasure they should be able to find from gathering the field-flowers. The doctor brought also a beautiful bunch of roses, geraniums, stocks, wall-flowers, and the other productions of his green-house, but they did not differ materially from those described in the last month.







M A Y .

THE snow-flakes fell less frequently, and at last were changed entirely to showers of rain. The grass began to turn green. The farmers were employed in sowing seed in the ground, which, during the last month, they had been preparing to receive it, by ploughing. Large bags of seed-grain were brought from the storehouses, and poured out, to be again committed to the ground, where it would shoot up, and grow, and bear fruit. The children of Mr. Milton's family had a piece of ground, which had been prepared for a garden, and the weather now permitted them to work in it almost daily. In the course of the last month, the bulbs which had been planted in the ground the preceding autumn, had sprung up, and the garden had produced snow-drops and crocuses; while the yellow narcissus had shown some of its flower-buds. These last had now advanced considerably, and, with the crown imperials,

made a very handsome appearance. About the middle of April, the children had planted the seeds of the chrysanthemum, love lies bleeding, evening primrose, white catchfly, African rose, gilia, sweet alyssum, mignonette, candy tuft, and Venus's looking-glass. It was necessary to rake the ground a little before sowing, as it had become hard on the surface by the frequent rains. These seeds had, some of them, made their appearance, and they now planted some others which they found were to be sown later. They were guided in some measure, in their garden operations, by a little work published a few years since by Mr. Breck, called "The Young Florist." This little work contains the directions for the seeds proper to be sown during each of the months, with many other hints which may be found useful to young gardeners. The seeds sown this month were the following:— the convolvulus of several kinds, nasturtium, four o'clocks, immortal flower, poppy, French marigold, cock's-comb, lupin, lemon balm, sweet basil or lavender, double balsam, scarlet cacalia, schizanthus, thunbergia, purple jacobea. The children had concluded to unite in having one garden, rather than four separate

spots of ground ; so that, by their conjoined labors, it was nicely taken care of. In the middle they had a large patch of the garden violet or heart's-ease, which, planted thus in a close mass, looked very beautifully, and sent forth a most agreeable odor. In suitable spots in the garden, they had several flowering shrubs ; among others the lilac and snowball, with the flowering almond and several species of spirea, some of which blossom early.

The first day of May had been very cold and cheerless, so that the children had not been able to go a Maying, as it is called. They therefore resolved to put off this expedition until the first of June, when the weather would probably be more suitable to a morning walk. They had, on some former occasions, thought to "do observance to the rights of May." But the cold, chilly, damp air, which made it necessary that they should wear their thick winter garments ; the wet and muddy walking, and the scarcity of wild flowers in bloom at that time,—made them conclude, that, however appropriate the time might be in England and more favored climes for rural walks, yet, in our bleak New England, there was not much pleasure in Maying, and that

it would be better to name it, and have it Juneing.

In the afternoon of May-day, George read to the family some account of the origin and methods of celebrating May-day, which had prevailed in different parts of the world, and in different ages. The Romans celebrated games in honor of Flora on the 4th of the Kalends of May, and continued them through the month. The May games, including dancing, and the display of elegant garlands of flowers, are clearly remnants of pagan festive worship. Some have contended that the May-pole is of Druid origin, but there is no ground for the supposition. It was at first, most probably, only a substitute for a living tree, on which flowers and offerings were suspended, the cross-pieces nailed to it being clearly for the better suspension of them. The May-games, too, were often held in situations where trees would not be found growing, as in towns and cities.

The sports of May were not always celebrated on the first day of the month, though people generally went to gather May-trees on the 30th of April. The May-tree, or May, as it is still called in the west of England, always

means there the white thorn, which is commonly in blossom by that day, and which the young people, rising up early in the morning, bring into the towns and villages.—It is remarkable that, at Helston, an obscure town in Cornwall, May-day is still kept on the 8th of the month, and is called the *furry day*, the etymology of which is unknown. There is no stationary May-pole, but green branches of a large size are displayed, decorated with garlands. The doors of all the dwelling-houses are thrown open, and the youth of both sexes, and of all ranks, dance up and down the streets, having wreaths of flowers in their hands. They enter in and come out of the houses dancing, till night closes the scene of festivity. This *furry day* is perhaps the most perfect of the remains of the Festival of Flora in the island. In other parts of Cornwall, May-day is only distinguished by the early rising of the young people of both sexes to gather May, and ramble into the country to breakfast at farm-houses or cottages on milk and clotted cream—a delicacy peculiar to the west of England.

In London, there was formerly a May-pole affixed in front of St. Andrew's Church, Cornhill. There was also in Fenchurch Street,

anciently, a noted Maygame on the 30th of the month, when a lord and lady of the May were chosen. At later periods, Robin Hood was introduced into these sports, and styled *lord of the May*. The London chimney-sweepers down to the present time hold the first of May as their holiday.

"I wonder," said Sophia, after George had finished reading, "that, since the custom of May-day holidays seems to prevail so much in England, the first settlers did not bring the custom over with them."

MRS. MILTON. "When you remember, my dear, the hardships the first settlers of New England were obliged to undergo, and how long a time must have passed before they were able to provide themselves with even the necessities of life, you will not wonder that they did not bestow much attention on its luxuries and sports; and their children must have grown up without having ever seen a May-pole, or heard of one, except in some of the tales of the far-off *mother country*, which seemed to them almost like fairy land, so different must have been the accounts of it, from their experience in the hard and rugged country where they had been bred, and where they saw every body

at work, and little time spent in play. But there is another reason. Our forefathers were of a strict practice in religious matters, and belonged to the sect called *Puritans*. You know that they came to this country to escape what they considered the sins and follies of the old country. The Puritans in England had accounted May-day among the abuses of the times, and it is probable that, in these public festivals, there was often excess and rioting. It is no wonder, therefore, that the Pilgrim fathers did not revive here a custom which they probably considered injurious to good morals, and of pagan origin. You recollect the ship in which the Pilgrim fathers reached Plymouth was named the *May-flower*."

The party all agreed that Mrs. Milton's account of the matter was quite satisfactory. Eleanor then begged permission to read some lines she had found in an English periodical work adapted to the season.

"TO MAY.

"Welcome, welcome, bonny May,
With thy fields so green, and thy skies so gay,
And thy sweet white flowers, that hang on the tree,
Welcome, welcome, dear May, to thee.

"Welcome to thy gentle moon,
And the soft blue calm of thy genial noon;
Welcome to thy lightsome eves
And the small birds singing among the leaves.

"Thy touch has wakened the spirit of love,
In earth, and sea, and in heaven above.
The cheerful air runs o'er with balm:
'Tis too soft for joy, and too gladsome for calm.

"From the heart of man thou hast taken the seal,
Thou hast taught the breast of dear woman to feel;
And cheeks are smiling and thoughts are free,
And all is happy on earth but me.

"I feel thee not as I felt of old,
For my heart within me is withered and cold;
I feel thee not, but I see thy face,
And 'tis bright with its own Elysian grace.

"Thou wert lovely once, thou art lovely now,
Though all is altered on earth but thou;
And the poet's voice, though it broken be,
Has yet a song of praise for thee.

"But thou art fleeting, and wilt not stay;
Like the joys of youth, thou art passing away,
With thy eye of light, and thy foot of mirth,
To chase the sun around the earth.

"Thou art passing onward, and wilt not stay:
Then a kind farewell to thee, bonny May.
Bright may thy path be, and happy thy cheer,
And a kind farewell till another year."

“What do you suppose was the reason, sister Eleanor, that the writer of these lines thought every body was happier than himself?”

“I do not know, Frank, indeed. I met with these lines in a magazine, and there was only a W. at the bottom; and whether it stood for *Willy*, or *Woful*, or what, I cannot tell. Perhaps he thought we should like his rhymes better if we pitied him for being sorrowful, and perhaps he was really unhappy. But if he were so, he ought to have thought that the good God, who made every thing about him so lovely, and looking so happy on May-day, would comfort his sorrows also.”

Towards the end of the month, the weather had become almost uniformly warm and pleasant. On a very fine afternoon, Dr. Solander came in, and proposed that they should walk out into the fields and gather their monthly bouquet. To this the young party gladly assented. They produced their tin box, which they sprinkled inside, that the flowers might be kept fresh and cool. They walked a short distance in the road, and then turned into a little thicket at the side. After having forced their way for a little while through the under-

brush, they emerged into a fine shaded path, which led for a considerable distance through the woods. Each side of this path was ornamented with frequent patches of the geranium maculatum, spotted geranium, or crane's-bill, (class 16th, order 5th.) Of this beautiful plant the girls gathered large quantities, and all agreed in thinking it as beautiful as any of the foreign species, which are cultivated in green-houses. At intervals they would find patches of grass completely colored with the violet, (*Viola*, class 5th, order 1st.) About the rocks clustered the *Aquilegia Canadensis*, the wild columbine, (class 13th, order 6th,) whose brilliant red flowers make one joyous to look at them. One or more varieties of the *Convallaria* (class 6th, order 1st) they found in abundance. The *Cornus Canadensis*, dwarf cornel, (class 4th, order 1st,) with its showy white involucre, which they thought, at first, were the petals of the flower, attracted their attention, and helped to fill their box. Here and there they met with the yellow violet, (*Viola Rotundifolia*,) the flowers of which are small early in the season, but become larger in the summer; the *Trientalis Americana*, star of the west, one of the very few plants contained

in the 7th class. One of the boys made an excursion to a little distance, and returned bearing a bunch of the *Cypripedium Acaule*, ladies' slipper, (class 20th, order 2d.) This singular flower, with its large, inflated nectary, they thought very odd. Some branches of the young sweet-brier leaves gave a delightful fragrance to their bouquet; and, after adding to it several varieties of flowers, they returned home, much pleased with their excursion. The young ladies arranged their flowers neatly in vases; and they all agreed nothing could be prettier than their first spring bouquet of wild flowers.









JUNE.

THE first day of June was very fine, clear, and warm ; and early in the morning the Milton family arose, with the intention of celebrating the rural festival for which the weather of May-day had been too cold and cheerless. Dr. Solander had invited his young friends to a feast, which he had prepared in a pleasant, shady grove, within a short distance of his house. This gentleman had suffered severe affliction in the death, a few years after their marriage, of a most lovely and amiable wife. He had no children of his own ; but his heart, made more tender by sorrow, poured itself out in benevolence and kindness to the whole human race, but more especially to children. He loved them of every age ; and children, who are not slow to find out who loves them, always took the greatest pleasure in his society. He had for many years been the near neighbor and intimate friend of Mr. and Mrs.

Milton, and their children had grown up under his eye, so that he took the most tender interest in their welfare. He never tired of talking with them, and was always ready to show them whatever was pleasant and entertaining in his large house, his fine library, where he had a great variety of pictures, and what he took most delight in, his garden, green-house, and grounds, which latter were laid out with the greatest taste. The Milton children, with several other young people in the neighborhood, assembled this morning at his house. Here they found a delicious breakfast, arranged with the greatest care by the housekeeper of the doctor, good Mrs. Anderson. After having partaken of this meal, they proceeded out to walk. They entered the grove, where they found wild flowers in considerable abundance. Violets, columbines, the Solomon's seal, and the wild geranium, were very abundant. As they passed through the walks, they gathered flowers from the shrubs which lined the paths. They at last reached an open place in a grove, which had been fitted up for the play-ground on this occasion. They chose a queen, and the lot fell on Sophia Milton. The young people wove for her a garland of flowers, which was placed

on her head, and she was conducted with considerable state, by her maids of honor, to her throne, which was a shaded seat, ornamented with flowers, and placed on a little elevation. But they soon were weary of these formal sports, which suited not exactly with the simple taste of children ; and the queen was not sorry to descend from her throne, after a few compliments were passed, and join in a good romp with her maids of honor and her subjects. There were provisions made for all sorts of sports — comfortable swings, alleys for bowling, balls, hoops, and every thing that children could desire. The doctor joined his young friends in their plays, and, after passing several hours in this manner, they returned home, much pleased with their June party.

As they returned home, they came in sight of a broad brook, and half-way over they discovered an old gentleman who lived in the neighborhood, and whom every body called uncle Isaac. He had become so engaged in his favorite sport of fishing, that he had waded out from the shore, and stood half-leg deep in the water, with his basket on his arm, awaiting, with breathless anxiety, the success of a nibble which he fancied he felt at the end of

his line. George was so pleased with the surrounding scenery, and the figure of good old uncle Isaac, that he made a sketch of it, which is placed at the beginning of the month.

One day this month, after dinner, Frank asked what the guns had been firing for, which he had heard at noon that day? He was told it was because it was the 17th of June, and in commemoration of the battle of Bunker Hill, which was fought on that day, in the year 1775. He expressed a desire to read an account of the battle, and George brought forward a little abstract of American history, from which he read the following narrative of the day:—

“BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL.

“The American commanders had obtained information that the British intended to post themselves on Bunker Hill. The position was a very important one, and it was determined to defeat their design. Accordingly, on the 16th of June, a band of one thousand provincials, under the command of Colonel Prescott, was sent to take possession of the station. It was late in the evening before they reached the heights, and full midnight before they began to dig the intrench-

ments. They proceeded in their labors with order, and the utmost silence, and it was the next morning before the British knew any thing of their operations.

“ At daybreak, the hasty works of the night were discovered, and a heavy cannonade was immediately commenced, from the ships, the floating batteries, and all the fortifications which could be made of any service. Bombs and shot were incessantly pouring among the hardy provincials, who continued, with unheeding perseverance, to strengthen their breast-works. In the course of the forenoon, they received an addition to their numbers, so that now they counted about fifteen hundred men.

“ At one o'clock, the royal forces were observed passing over to Charlestown, in boats and barges. They consisted of about three thousand men, well provided with artillery. They were formed in two lines, and advanced with great boldness to the attack. The Americans withheld their fire till they were within eight or ten rods, or, as General Putnam said, ‘till they saw the white of their enemies’ eyes.’ Their discharge of musketry was then general, and very fatal, till the regular troops were driven back in disorder, even to their boats.

With great difficulty, the officers succeeded in rallying them, and they again marched forward with valor, till a second deadly fire again put them to flight.

“A third assault was more successful. The Americans had expended nearly all their ammunition, and could obtain no further supply. After resisting, as bravely as they could, with stones and the butts of their muskets, they retreated under a heavy fire. They were not very warmly pursued, and met with not a very great loss.

“Among the killed was General Joseph Warren, one of the earliest and most zealous patriots in the cause of American freedom. Such was his valor and his zeal, that he rushed into the very front of the field, encouraging the soldiers by his noble example. Near the close of the battle, he received a fatal shot, and instantly died. His loss was much lamented, and his memory is fondly cherished by his countrymen. The corner-stone of a monument, on Bunker Hill, in commemoration of this eventful day and its doings, was laid with great ceremony on the 17th of June, 1825. It is to be built of granite, and has risen to a considerable height, but as yet remains unfinished.

“Just at the beginning of the battle, orders were given by the British general to set fire to Charlestown. In a short time, this ancient town, consisting of about five hundred buildings, was wrapped in flames. It was almost entirely consumed, and a great amount of property, belonging to the distressed inhabitants of Boston, was also destroyed. The battle, and the conflagration, presented a scene of the most intense interest to many thousand spectators, who, from the surrounding heights, the houses and steeples of the neighboring towns, were waiting the issue of the contest.”

This was a fine month for the garden. The roses began to show promise of flowers, and the cinnamon rose and early white bloomed before the close of the month. The splendid peonies made a very glorious show in the borders. The sweet William of various kinds, spiderwort, fox-glove, monk's-hood, and many others, gave their garden a very gay appearance, and furnished the young ladies with flowers to place fresh every morning in the vases, to decorate the parlor. They were all employed, frequently, in weeding, as the chick-weed, and other unwelcome visitors of the gar-

den, grew with great rapidity. The annuals they had planted had come up in thick bunches. These it was necessary to thin out, and transplant such as were to be removed to other parts of the garden. The birds visited often their garden, and they found much amusement in watching their motions. The robins and swallows were very numerous. Mr. Milton was not willing any birds should be shot within his grounds, thinking that the insects they devoured would have injured him more than the loss of the cherries and peas with which they sometimes took the liberty to regale themselves, and moisten their throats after the exertions they had made to send forth their notes of melody.

This month also furnished some of the most delicious garden fruits. Towards the close of it, the Miltons had strawberries in abundance, currants, raspberries and gooseberries ; and the cherries had advanced so far as to furnish materials for a cherry pudding, though they had not yet become ripe enough to eat. But while there were strawberries in plenty, they were willing to wait for the cherries.

One warm evening, the children were much pleased with the appearance of the fire-flies, or lightning-bugs, as they are sometimes called.

These little sparklers were seen in great numbers, twinkling about in a meadow opposite. The children succeeded in catching one, which they placed under a glass, that they might examine it at leisure. They found it to be an insect about the size of a honey-bee. The light part was discernible, but was not nearly as brilliant when it was quiet as when it was in motion. George asked if the light produced by this insect was the same as that given out by the glow-worm, of which we read so much in English books. His father told him he presumed it was, though more feeble; but Mr. Milton had never seen a glow-worm. Mrs. Milton asked them if they had ever read the lines of Cowper, addressed to the glow-worm; and finding they had not, Eleanor got the volume and read them aloud.

“THE GLOW-WORM.

“Beneath the hedge, or near the stream,
A worm is known to stray,
That shows at night a lucid beam,
Which disappears by day.

“Disputes have been, and still prevail,
From whence his rays proceed;
Some give that honor to his tail,
And others to his head.

"But this is sure—the hand of might,
That kindles up the skies,
Gives him a modicum of light
Proportioned to his size.

"Perhaps indulgent Nature meant,
By such a lamp bestowed,
To bid the traveller, as he went,
Be careful where he trod ; —

"Nor crush a worm, whose useful light
Might serve, however small,
To show a stumbling-stone by night,
And save him from a fall.

"Whate'er she meant, this truth divine
Is legible and plain —
'Tis Power almighty bids him shine,
Nor bids him shine in vain.

"Ye proud and wealthy, let this theme
Teach humbler thoughts to you ;
Since such a reptile has a gem,
And boasts its splendor too."

Frank thought it was time now to uncover the fire-fly, which had thus been the means of giving them half an hour's entertainment. He lifted the glass, and off flew the little fellow to join his brilliant companions in the meadow.

Dr. Solander now came in, with a bouquet of wild flowers. He told the young ladies he

thought it too hot for them to join him in a walk ; but he had been to visit a sick person, and, returning through a little grove, he had found a few flowers, which he had brought in for their amusement. His bunch received a very brilliant character from containing several specimens of the *Lilium Canadense*, common yellow lily, (class 6th, order 1st,) and the red lily also. There were still remaining some species of the Solomon's seal, *Convallaria*, of the same class and order as the lily. There were a few anemones, which he had found remaining, though it was quite late for them ; the *Pyrola*, winter-green, (class 10th, order 1st ;) the *Sisyrinchium Anceps*, blue-eyed grass, (class 16th, order 5th ;) the *Azalia*, wild honeysuckle or swamp pink, (class 5th, order 1st). This fragrant and beautiful plant was hailed with great pleasure by the girls, being the first they had seen the present season. He also had a specimen of the singular plant called *Sarracenia Purpurea*, or side-saddle flower, (class 13th, order 1st.) The leaves of this plant are formed by a large hollow tube, swelling in the middle, curved, and growing smaller, till it ends in a stem, contracted at the mouth, furnished with a large, spreading,

heart-shaped appendage at top, which is hairy within, the hairs pointing downwards. The full-grown leaves will contain a wine-glass of water, and are rarely found empty. The pistil rises up in a peculiar manner, and spreads itself out over the flower, like an umbrella. He had also a specimen of the *Calla*, (class 21st, order 8th,) which they found but little inferior in beauty to plants of the same species cultivated in green-houses. Dr. Solander showed them, lastly, some specimens of the white-weed, *Chrysanthemum Leucanthemum*, (class 19th, order 2d.) This, he told them, the little French girls told fortunes with, by naming silently their lover, then pulling out a leaf and leaving one. When they pluck the leaf, they say, "*He loves me ; he loves me a little — a great deal — none at all ; yes — no — yes ;*" and whichever of these phrases they are speaking when they pull out the last leaf, they think, shows them the state of the young person's mind after whom they named the daisy, as they call it. The children immediately fell to pulling the daisies to pieces, after the French fashion, and the evening passed off in great gayety and good humor.





JULY.

THE long, hot days of midsummer had now come, and the children were obliged to confine themselves to the house through the middle of the day ; but they enjoyed the mornings and evenings, and more especially the sunset hour. This month was the season for hay-making, and though this part of the farmer's labors is not so much a season of frolic and holiday with us as it is represented to be in England, where it is customary for women and girls to join in the labors of hay-making, yet the fragrance of the hay is so agreeable, and so many boys and men are engaged in working in the same field, that it is rather more merry and cheerful than some other parts of a farmer's life. One afternoon, when the weather had been very fine through the early part of the day, and a large quantity of grass was nearly ready for the barn, clouds arose, and there was a prospect of a violent shower. Mr. Milton and the boys

hastened to the hay-field, to assist all in their power to get in the hay before the shower came on. All the men and boys were collected, and the labor went on briskly. Even little Frank found he could be quite useful in *raking after*, as it is called, that is, drawing the rake after the cart, to collect the small bunches, which occasionally fall off from the full-loaded hay-cart. Their efforts were crowned with success, and the last load, with Frank on the top of it, was safely housed within the ample barn, when the clouds burst, and the rain fell in torrents. The rain, which was so near drenching the hay, was very refreshing and useful to the gardens. The weather had been for a long time dry and sultry, and the earth had become very much parched, and the flowers, in the middle of the day, were so much dried by the heat, that they had hardly time to recover themselves in the evening and during the night. But this fine shower gave them new vigor, at the same time that it animated the weeds, and called for more exertion on the part of the young gardeners, to prevent them from overrunning the whole spot. Their garden was much infested with the chick-weed, to which, notwithstanding it is so common,

botanists have given the very pretty name of *Stellaria Media*, and placed it in the 10th class, 3d order. This little weed is a favorite food of the Canary-bird ; and the girls used to collect it when they weeded the garden, and carry it to a neighbor, old Madam Hutchinson, who kept a great many Canaries. The girls wondered at her taste in keeping little birds shut up in cages, when they are so much happier in the open air, and their songs sound so much sweeter when they are at liberty ; yet, as they could not make the old lady agree with them in opinion, they were willing to do all in their power to contribute to the comfort of the little prisoners, and a fresh basket of *Stellaria* always seemed very agreeable to them.

At the beginning of this month, the flower-garden was indeed in its glory. The whole family of roses, enough of themselves to make the garden beautiful, shed sweetness all around. Then there were long borders of pinks, which flowered so abundantly, that the children could gather the most immense bunches to take to school ; and there were still so many remaining, that no one would suppose any had been gathered. There were the larkspurs of various colors. A very pretty amusement is found

by some children, in pulling out the little horns which are found in this common garden flower, and putting them one into another till they form a wreath. This wreath can be pressed, and long retains its color and form. They were able to gather for the vases the double feverfew, coreopsis, scarlet lychnis, spireas, phloxes, mullein pink, and Canterbury bells. The honeysuckles were in bloom over the trellis that bordered the garden on one side, and sent forth a very sweet odor, particularly toward evening. The plants were tied to neat sticks, as they advanced in height, to prevent them from being beaten down by heavy rains or high winds. All flower-stalks were cut off after flowering, except such as were wanted for seed, and all straggling branches neatly trimmed off. There were several kinds of lily at this time, which added to the beauty of the garden.

The fruits still continued abundant, and of various kinds. The cherries had now become ripe, and this year were very plenty; and though the birds, with which the garden and grounds were filled, helped themselves without much delicacy, there were still enough left for the use of the family; and it was found a very

agreeable recreation, for either boy or girl, toward the close of the day, when the rays of the sun had lost something of their power, to ascend a pair of steps, placed firmly under the tree, and, seated on the highest step, select, from among the thickly-hung branches, the ripest and largest specimens of the fruit. The young people were often all called upon, in the morning, to pick strawberries and raspberries for the day. On some occasions they united to gather fruit in large quantities, and Mrs. Milton and her daughters employed themselves in preserving it, in sugar or honey, that they might in winter be able to enjoy some of the luxuries which were now so abundantly spread about them. The girls were very happy to assist in these operations, and Sophia was already quite skilful in the work, to which, being the eldest, she had been longer accustomed than her sister. Pears were very abundant, as well as currants; and apples were beginning to ripen.

On the 4th of the month, there had been, as usual in almost every town, great or small, in this country, a military parade, and other signs of rejoicing. Frank, after dinner, said to his father, "What do they have such a

parade for, on this day? I hear it called INDEPENDENCE, and, wishing to be as wise as the rest, I have looked out the word in my dictionary, and it said 'freedom — exemption from reliance or control.' Now, though I see every body seems to do what he likes on the 4th of July, and sometimes, I think, rather silly things, yet I do not know why people should do it on the 4th more than any other day of July, or of the year."

MR. MILTON. "I think, my dear, none but a very little boy would be obliged to ask the question; but if you have any doubts about the matter, you do very right to ask to have it explained, for I dare say you will enjoy the gayety of the day better, when you know why it is celebrated.

"You know, then, my dear, that the people who first came to live in this country came from Europe, and those who came to this part of it, came from England. They had got tired of living in England, because they could not do as they liked there. There were laws which compelled every body to worship God after a particular form; and this form happened to be one which the Puritans, as the people who came over here, and those who thought

like them, were called, did not think the best, and would not comply with, and for refusing, they were sadly persecuted ; so they concluded to come over to this country, where there were no people except Indians, of whom they thought they could buy some land, and quietly settle down, and serve God and do their own business in their own way. They considered themselves still as Englishmen, and the king of England as their king. As this part of America had been discovered first by Englishmen, the king of England claimed it as his, and they had to ask his permission to settle here, and do as they liked in matters of religion. King James the First did not positively agree that they should do this, but he did not molest them. For many years they were very poor, and the English government did not think much about them ; but when they increased in numbers, the people in England began to take more notice of them. They made the Americans pay taxes to assist in supporting the government, though they did not allow them to send any of their men to England to sit in the parliament, and say what should be done with the money. They used to choose governors in England, and send them

out here to govern the people, instead of letting them say who should be the governor. And when the English were fighting with France, they made the Americans help them, by gathering armies, and going to fight the people who lived in this country, but in parts of it which were under the French government. This the American people did; and I suppose that what they learned about making war in these combats with the French, helped them when they came afterward to be obliged to fight with the English. Things kept growing worse and worse. The Americans increased in numbers, and hated more and more to be governed by the English; and the more populous and valuable the country became, the more unwilling the English were to give it up; so they sent over armies to watch the people, and at last they came to fighting. The Americans had no regular army at first; but the people were all so tired of being, as they thought, so ill-treated, that every body that could get a gun, was glad to take it and fight the British whenever he could get a chance. You have read about the Boston massacre, the battles of Lexington and Concord, and the battle of Bunker Hill. The

Americans thought, as they refused to obey the English government, they ought to set up one of their own. So each of the thirteen states sent delegates to a Congress, which met at Philadelphia. They chose General Washington to be commander-in-chief of their armies, and declared the states **INDEPENDENT** of the crown of Great Britain, that is, according to your dictionary, free from its power, and no longer submitting to its direction and control. It was eight years before the British would agree that they should be so, and they kept sending out armies, and the Americans had a sad time of it. The men were compelled to leave their homes, and go and fight; and the government had very little money to support, and clothe, and pay them; but a good Providence carried them through all their difficulties, and at last the British were obliged to give up the matter, take home their troops, and make peace. Since then the country has prospered greatly. The government has become established, and every thing goes on happily. The declaration of Independence was made on the 4th of July, in the year 1776; and, as it was the beginning of the American government, it is called the Birth-day of the Nation. And if it is matter of rejoicing that the birth-

day of a single little boy or girl has come round, it certainly seems right that the birthday of a great and happy nation should be observed in every part of it with marks of joy. Some of the ways which are taken to celebrate the day, seem, and are foolish ; but the beauty of the thing is, that every body feels he has a right to spend this day and all his days just as he pleases, provided he does nothing which shall injure himself or another person ; and this is being INDEPENDENT."

FRANK. "I thank you, papa, for giving me this account. I think I understand the matter pretty well, and I shall be glad when I am old enough to read some good history of the country from beginning to end, and particularly the life of General Washington ; for I think he must have been a wonderful man."

Sophia now produced some beautiful butterflies, which had just hatched out from the chrysalises, where they had been concealed for several months. She had seen some of the large potato-worms, the last autumn, and having been told that beautiful butterflies proceeded from this animal, in itself so disagreeable, she took them, when she perceived they were getting into their torpid state, and placed them in a box with some of the leaves of the plant on

which she discovered them. Here, in a short time, they spun for themselves the cone which served for their winter quarters. When it was near the time when she supposed they would leave their cones, Sophia removed them to another box, which was covered with a thin lace at the top, through which she could see what was going on within. On visiting her box this morning, to her great delight she discovered three butterflies, of the largest size and most brilliant colors. The children were much pleased with looking at them; but the butterflies began to feel their new life, and fluttered about as if they wanted more room. The box was accordingly carried out to the piazza, and the lace removed. The brilliant insects remained for a few moments, opening and shutting their wings, as if to make sure that they knew how to use them, and then they soared away into the air, and the children soon lost sight of them. Sophia thought their splendid appearance fully repaid her for the trouble she had taken in preserving the potato-worms.

George told her that her butterflies reminded him of some pretty lines he had seen lately, which he should like to read. He was desired to do so, and read

"THE BUTTERFLY'S FIRST FLIGHT.

"Thou hast burst from thy prison,
Bright child of the air,
Like a spirit just risen
From its mansion of care.

"Thou art joyously winging
Thy first ardent flight
Where the gay lark is singing
Her notes of delight, —

"Where the sunbeams are throwing
Their glories on thine,
Till thy colors are glowing
With tints more divine; —

"Then tasting new pleasure
In summer's green bowers,
Reposing at leisure
On fresh-opened flowers; —

"Or delighted to hover
Around them to see
Whose charms, airy rover,
Bloom sweetest for thee, —

"And fondly inhaling
Their fragrance, till day
From thy bright eye is failing
And fading away.

“ Then, seeking some blossom
Which looks to the west,
Thou dost find in its bosom
Sweet shelter and rest ;—

“ And there dost betake thee
Till darkness is o’er,
And the sunbeams awake thee
To pleasure once more.”

The girls thanked George for the lines, and Sophia requested a copy for her scrap-book, which George not only promised her, but agreed to make the copy for her in his own neatest hand.

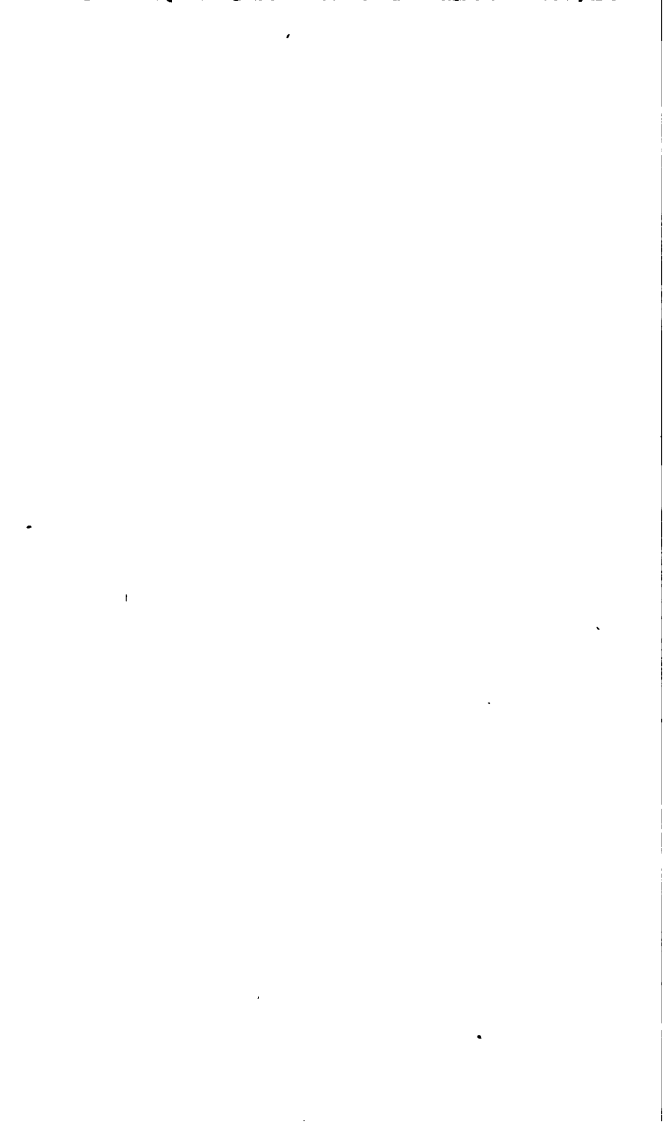
Dr. Solander now came in, and invited them all to walk. He told them that the field-flowers were not as beautiful as those which bloom earlier in the summer, but he thought they might find some that were pretty. They would have the walk, at any rate, and could return by way of his grounds, where his gardener would be very happy to make up any deficiencies that might be found. John had been lamenting to him, that it was at least three days since the young ladies had been over to look at his flowers, and he depended

on making up a nice bouquet for an Independence present to them.

The walk proved very agreeable. They found a number of flowers in the woods, though hardly any of the more delicate and tender kind. They gathered some of the *Spirea Alba*, meadow-sweet, (class 12th, order 4th,) and another of the same family, commonly called the *hardhack*. They gave a delicious odor to their bouquets by adding to them sprigs of the sweet-brier leaves, the *Rosa Rubiginosa*, (class 12th, order 5th.) They found in abundance the flowering raspberry, *Rubus Odoratus*, (class 12th, order 5th.) They were far enough from the sea-shore to be able to find the splendid mountain laurel, *Kalmia Latifolia*, (class 10th, order 1st.) The hedges of this beautiful plant make the most brilliant appearance at the season when it is in flower. They passed a pond, on the surface of which floated the graceful water-lily, *Nymphæa Odorata*, (class 13th, order 1st.) The boys, with some difficulty, succeeded in getting a few specimens of this beautiful and fragrant flower, from whose large root, firmly placed at the bottom of the pond, springs up the long stalk which carries nourishment to the flower and the

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large, round leaves, which float on the surface of the water, and enjoy the rays of the sun. Of these and many others they formed very pretty bouquets, and returned home, as had been arranged, through the doctor's grounds. John was awaiting them with the largest and most tastefully arranged bouquet of garden-flowers which was ever seen. He wondered a little that they would take the trouble to go so far after what he considered no better than weeds, when the garden at home was in such glory. He had for each of the girls a flower of the fragrant magnolia, *Magnolia Glauca*, (class 13th, order 6th,) gathered from a shrub which had been transplanted from a distant part of the state, and flourished in Dr. Solander's garden. The very powerful and delicious odor of this flower was highly praised; and, wishing John a good night, the young party returned home, Frank bearing in triumph the enormous bouquet, and the rest of the party well satisfied with the success of their botanical researches.





AUGUST.

THE season advanced, and the days began to shorten, though this change was not very perceptible at the beginning of the month. The fruits were advancing to maturity, and many of the grains were already ripe. The Indian corn, although not ripe, was in a state to be eaten green, and furnished a most delicious article of food, particularly when, after having been boiled, it was cut from the cob and mixed with shell-beans. This dish, so great a favorite in New England, is said to have been in use among the Indians, whose name for it is now retained in some parts of the country, viz. *succotash*.

“Father,” said Frank, toward the close of this month, “I heard John saying the other day, that he must make haste and get in his grain; for if the rains came on before it was housed, it would *grow*. Is it not good to have it grow as long as it remains in the

field? I should think the more it grew the better it would be."

MR. MILTON. "In a late season, or when the weather has been rainy, the grain gets beaten down to the ground, the seeds are shed, or rotted by the wet, and, if the weather is warm, the grain *grows*; that is, the seeds begin to sprout and put out shoots. Grain in this state is sweet and moist: it soon spoils on keeping, and bread made from it is clammy and unwholesome."

GEORGE. "I recollect, you explained this to me once, when I was reading Mr. Southey's story about Bishop Hatto, who was eaten up by the rats."

FRANK. "Eaten up by the rats! What was that story, and what had it to do with grain sprouting?"

GEORGE. "I will try to repeat the lines to you, and then you will see.

"BISHOP HATTO.

"The summer and autumn had been so wet,
That in winter the corn was *growing* yet;
'Twas a piteous sight to see all around
The grain lie rotting on the ground.

"Every day the starving poor
Crowded around Bishop Hatto's door,
For he had a plentiful last year's store,

And all the neighborhood could tell
His granaries were furnished well.

"At last Bishop Hatto appointed a day
To quiet the poor without delay ;
He bade them to his great barn repair,
And they should have food, for the winter, there.

"Rejoiced, such tidings glad to hear,
The poor folk flocked from far and near ;
The barn was full as it could hold
Of women and children, young and old.

"And when he found it would hold no more,
Bishop Hatto he shut fast the door ;
And while for mercy on Christ they call,
He set fire to the barn and burnt them all.

"'In faith, 'tis a glorious bonfire,' said he,
'And the country is much obliged to me
For ridding it, in these times forlorn,
Of rats which only consume the corn.'

"Away to his palace then hastened he,
And he ate his supper merrily ;
And he slept that night like an innocent man,
But Bishop Hatto never slept again.

"In the morning, when he entered the hall,
Where his picture hung against the wall,
A sweat, like death, all over him came,
For the rats had eaten it out of the frame.

"A man came running from the farm,
And he had a countenance pale with alarm ;
'My lord, when I opened your granary this morn,
The rats had eaten all the corn.'

"Another came running presently,
And he was pale as pale could be.
'Fly, my lord bishop, fly,' said he;
'An army of rats is coming this way;
The Lord forgive you for yesterday.'

"'I'll go to my tower on the Rhine,' said he;
'Tis the strongest place in Germany;
The walls are high, and the river is deep,
And the stream is broad, and the bank is steep.'

"Then quick to the castle he hastened away,
And he crossed the stream without delay;
And he entered the tower, and barred with care
All the windows, doors, and loop-holes there.

"He laid him down and closed his eyes,
But soon a scream made him arise;
He listened and looked — it was only the cat;
But the bishop he grew more fearful for that;
For she was staring wild with fear
At the army of rats that were drawing near.

"For they have crossed the water so deep,
And they have climbed the bank so steep;
And now by thousands in they crawl
Through the cracks and loop-holes in the wall.

"And in at the windows, and in at the door,
And down from the ceiling, and up through the floor,
From within and without, from above and below,
And all at once to the bishop they go.

"They have whetted their teeth against the stones,
And now they pick the bishop's bones;
They tore the flesh from every limb,
For they were sent to do judgment on him."

FRANK. "What an odd story that is, father! but I know it is not true."

MR. MILTON. "I thought you were wise enough to know that, Frank, or I should not have allowed George to tell you the story; but it is so extravagant and wonderful, that I thought you would listen to it in the same manner as you do to a fairy tale. There is, however, a tower on the river Rhine, in Germany, which is called the Mäuse Thurm, or Mouse Tower; and there is a story told about it, from which Mr. Southey made this poem. Perhaps there was once a very miserly bishop, who refused to give food to his poor neighbors, and went away to this strong tower with his corn, and shut himself up there; and the rats came after his corn, and, perhaps, killed him; but I suspect there was never any one, bishop or not, who was so wicked as to burn up a whole barn full of people."

SOPHIA. "I perceived to-day, father, in beginning to read Scott's Napoleon, that Bonaparte was born in this month of August. Can you remember much about him?"

MR. MILTON. "O, yes, my dear. The days of his glory were not over until the year 1815, not much more than twenty years ago; so that your mother and I have the most

distinct recollection of the startling events of his career, as they used to burst upon us, month after month, when vessels arrived from Europe. It was certainly a most wonderful period of the world's history."

FRANK. "Cannot you tell us a little about Bonaparte, father, and how he came to be so great a man. I am not old enough to remember about him, nor even to read a full account of his life."

MR. MILTON. "I am afraid we should both get tired, if I were to undertake to give you much of an account of him and his doings; but I will try to give you a little sketch of the story.

"You know that France is a very large country in Europe, with a very pleasant climate, and inhabited by a vast number of people. They had been governed, for a great many hundred years, by kings of one family. The people of the country were divided pretty nearly into very rich and very poor people. There were much fewer of the class of whom, happily, we in this country have so many, who are neither very rich nor very poor, than there is with us. The very rich people had become, in a great many instances, very idle and extravagant; the poor were, in general,

very ignorant ; and the learned men had taken up some strange and wicked notions, and instead of making people better by the books they made, they confused the minds of folks, and made them forget what little good they knew before. After the American revolution had been finished, and our country was going on well, some of their people wished very much to make a change in France ; but every thing was so different there from what it was in our country, that it was very difficult to arrange any thing as it ought to be. They put down the king and his family, and at last beheaded them. They endeavored to establish a new government, but they did not succeed in arranging any permanent one ; the greatest confusion arose ; thousands of people were beheaded, many more driven off from their homes ; property was taken from its real owners ; and for many years France was the scene of the most terrible actions that were ever known. Bonaparte appeared first as a soldier. He was born at Corsica, August 15th, 1769 ; he was educated at a military school, and soon entered the army ; he advanced by degrees, until he succeeded in abolishing most of the forms of government, and making himself emperor, with the most uncontrolled

power. The nation was exhausted by all the horrors it had passed through; and his course was so rapid, that the people had hardly time to know what he was meditating, until he had raised himself above all control. He was not content with this, but retained his great armies; conquered the whole of Italy; made one of his brothers king of Spain, another king of Holland, and his infant son king of Rome. He compelled the pope, who, you know, in countries where the Catholic religion prevails, is the most sacred of all persons, to leave Rome, and come to Paris, where he detained him for some time, and made him assist at his coronation as emperor. All this grandeur, however, did not satisfy him; he raised the most immense army ever known, and went to the north to conquer Russia; he advanced to the city of Moscow, the ancient capital of the Russian empire. The Russians did not attack him, but set on fire their own city; it was impossible to stop the flames, and the unfortunate Frenchmen found themselves, in the depth of winter, in an enemy's country, and without any means of subsistence. They tried to return home, and had to encounter the cold of the winter, at the same time that they

were pursued by the armies of the Russians. The Russians, the Prussians, and British, had formed an alliance against Bonaparte. He had separated himself from his first wife, and married a daughter of the emperor of Austria. On this account, the emperor of Austria did not openly join the allies against Bonaparte; but his troops, that were in connection with Napoleon, had a secret agreement with the allies, and did not act heartily for France. At last, after the most incredible sufferings, the remains of the French army reached Paris. The French were much dissatisfied with the result of this campaign. Bonaparte, however, raised a new army, and went into Germany to fight with the allied army. His former success did not follow him; his army was defeated, and the wreck of it returned, broken and dispirited, to Paris, the allied armies following him there. Bonaparte then agreed to give up the government, which was restored to the family, members of which had worn the crown for so many years before; and Louis XVIII., the brother of the one who was beheaded in the time of the revolution, was made king. Bonaparte was banished to Elba, in the year 1814, a small island near the coast

of Italy, over which he had the dominion. But the dominion of such a little corner was only a mockery to his proud spirit. He kept up the most close attention to the affairs of Europe, and when he found a favorable opportunity, about a year after he gave up the government, he escaped from Elba, February 26th, 1815; returned to France; made a proclamation to the army; and the royal family left Paris. The greatest confusion prevailed, in the midst of which Bonaparte took possession of the government. He raised a new army to meet the allies, who immediately prepared for him. The battle of Waterloo took place in June, when the allies conquered the French army, and followed Bonaparte to Paris. Here he offered to make a treaty with them, by giving up the government to his infant son. But this the allies refused, and he relinquished the government altogether, and the old royal family, the Bourbons, were again called back. Bonaparte then went on board an English ship, and gave himself up to the English government. After considering what was best to do with him, it was concluded to carry him to St. Helena, an island in the middle of the South Atlantic Ocean, where he was kept

a prisoner until his death, which took place May 5th, 1821, at the age of fifty-two. None of his own family followed him to this retreat; but several of those to whom he had been friendly in the days of his glory, accompanied him, and remained with him as long as he lived. He did not bear the reverses of his fortune very calmly, but was constantly complaining and groaning at petty annoyances, which, perhaps, could not have been avoided. He lamented his separation from his wife and child, though it does not appear that she ever solicited the permission to share his exile. The friends who had followed him to St. Helena showed him always the greatest respect and attention. He was always addressed by them as emperor, and the forms of a court were kept up about him. He lies buried at St. Helena, and a willow is planted at the head of his grave; and a little spring of fresh water, which he had caused to be opened during his life, flows gently near the spot where he rests, after all the toils, and splendors, and mortifications, of his life. His son, who received in his cradle the title of king of Rome, lived under the care of his grandfather, the emperor of Austria, and died

at about the age of sixteen. When you come to read, in detail, all the events in the life of this wonderful man, you will be astonished that so much could be crowded into so short a space; and that persons no older than your father and mother, can remember the rise, and progress, and fall, of a man whose doings fill so many volumes of the history of the world."

The garden was very gay and brilliant this month. The sun-flowers, the hibiscus, and the hollyhocks, the phloxes, the tiger lily, among the larger plants; the yellow *Eschscholitzia*, the four-o'clocks, the tassel flower, the mignionette, balsams, and many other smaller flowers,—furnished materials for the flower-vases, and gave the garden a very bright appearance.

On the borders of the brooks still lingered the splendid cardinal flower, *Lobelia Canadensis*, (class 5th, order 1st.) Its bright scarlet colors gave glory to the bouquet, though it withered soon on being gathered. The *Clematis Virginiana*, the traveller's joy, (class 13th, order 6th,) was seen climbing round, making a very pretty appearance. The long

feathery tails of the seeds resemble tufts of wool. Several of the *Gerardias*, (class 14th, order 2d,) the yellow and purple, made, this month, a pretty show. The *Mimulus Ringens*, or monkey flower. These, and many others, served as texts for Dr. Solander to explain the science of botany to his young friends, and the field-flower bouquets compared very well with those of the garden.









SEPTEMBER.

THE days had now grown perceptibly shorter, and the mornings and evenings had become quite cool. The apple-harvest had come, and the children took much pleasure in joining in gathering the apples, assisting to spread them in the apple-chamber, and occasionally going to watch the business of cider-making, which was attended to this month. They did not object to taste the new, sweet cider; and the favorite method of doing this was to suck it through a straw. After the apples had been ground in the mill, the juice pressed out, and made into cider, the remaining part, which is called *pumice*, and consists of the pulp and seeds of the apple, is sometimes made use of to form a hedge. A trench is dug, and the pumice thrown in. The seeds sprout and come up in a mass, and in a short time the plants which spring from them make a very close and pretty hedge. This method

of hedging had been recently introduced into the neighborhood of Mr. Milton's farm, and the boys begged permission of their father to make an attempt to hedge in this way the spot which was devoted to their use as a playground, and a part of which formed their garden. Mr. Milton gave his consent, and the boys, with the assistance of one of the laborers on the farm, prepared the trench, conveyed to it the pumice, and covered it up, awaiting, with some anxiety and impatience, until another year should show them the success of their labors.

This was an abundant year for grain. It was now gathered in, and the noise of the flail might be heard daily from the barn. George and Frank, who were fond of joining in all active occupations, provided themselves with flails, of a size which they could manage, that they might assist in the threshing.

The autumnal equinox, when day and night are equal over the whole globe, happens about the 23d of September. This, as well as the vernal equinox, is apt to be attended with storms. This month, there was quite a violent storm of rain, accompanied with a very high wind. The pear-trees, and some of the later

peach-trees, were still laden with fruit, and the high wind beat it off in great quantities. At each interval in the rain, the boys would rush out, and gather up the fruit which had been thrown to the ground, and carry it to a large chamber, where it could be spread out to dry and ripen.

Toward the end of the month, the leaves of the garden-trees had fallen off considerably, and those of the forest had assumed the various and brilliant hues which make an autumnal scene so beautiful, and which are said to be peculiar to the forests of America. Every shade of every color could be found among the leaves. Sophia and Eleanor gathered them sometimes, and amused themselves by pasting them down on paper, or on tables and vases, to which, when neatly stuck and varnished over, the autumn leaves formed a very pretty decoration.

George, who generally found some historical event, or biographical notice of some celebrated man, for every month of the year, mentioned that the birth-day of Lafayette happened on the 6th of September, 1757.

Frank desired his father to give them some account of the life of Lafayette.

MR. MILTON. "In the first place, he had a very long name. It was the fashion in France at that time, and I believe still continues to be, in distinguished families, to give a great many names to children. His was Joseph Marie Paul Roche Ives Gilbert Motier de Lafayette. He was born of a noble family, and was just entering the state of manhood at the time the American Revolution took place. The American government had sent agents to France, to try to persuade the French government to help them, by lending them money. The French took considerable interest in the matter, and, as they were almost always at war with England, they were not sorry to do any thing which would injure England; but the French government had not much money to spare, and while they were hesitating what to do, Lafayette, then only nineteen years old, fitted out a vessel at his own expense, and prepared to come over in it to help the Americans fight for their liberty. He was afraid the government might prevent him from going, if they knew he intended it; so he ordered his vessel to go round to a port in Spain, where he went to meet it. When the French government found out what he was about to do, they

did, in fact, send to prevent him from going; but it was too late; his ship had sailed the day before the messengers arrived. He arrived safely in America, and offered his services to the Congress, by whom he was well received, and made a major-general in the army. He was also kindly received by General Washington, and invited to become a member of his family while he remained in America. Shortly after his arrival, he fought in the battle of Brandywine, and received a wound, which caused him to be lame as long as he lived. After having remained here some time, he returned to France, to obtain supplies from his own government, of money and men to help the Americans. The king of France refused to see him, because he had left France without his permission; but as he was connected by his own family and that of his wife (for he was married before he came to America) with almost all the principal persons at court, this displeasure of the king did not give him much trouble. About this time, there was a treaty concluded between America and France, and the French government sent out a fleet and army. As soon as this treaty was concluded, Lafayette returned to America, and was re-

ceived with great rejoicings. He now had a body of men placed under his control, and these he clothed and supported at his own expense. He continued here until the end of the war, rendering the most efficient assistance.

“When the war was over, he returned to France; and soon after the troubles came on, which I told you about when I was relating the story of Bonaparte. As Lafayette had been in America so long, and done so much to enable the Americans to recover their liberty, he hoped, at first, that the French would be able to make some favorable changes in their government. But he soon found people were getting very unruly, and, instead of making things better, were making them worse. He was commander of a body of troops called the National Guards, and he did all he could to maintain order and save the lives of the king and queen; but the people had become so unruly and disorderly,—mobs filled the streets, who were so violent,—that Lafayette could not restrain them; and he tried to prevail on the king and queen to put themselves into his hands, that he might help them to escape. But he was not able to do this, and,

disgusted with affairs, he gave up his command, and retired to his farm at La Grange. When affairs grew much worse, he returned to the command of the army, and tried to stop the horrors of the revolution. But he could not persuade the soldiers to do as he wished, and, finding he was no longer safe in France, he, with three of his principal officers, retired beyond the limits of it. He there fell into the hands of the Austrians, and was put into prison at Olmutz, in Moravia, a hundred and fifty miles north of Vienna. Here he remained five years, and was treated with the greatest cruelty. His estates in France were confiscated, and his wife was cast into prison. Washington did all he could, by sending to the American ministers in Europe, and desiring them to do all they could in favor of Lafayette, to cause him to be set at liberty; and he wrote a letter with his own hand to the emperor of Austria in his behalf. Two gentlemen, one of whom was an American, (Mr. Huger,) made an attempt to help him to make his escape, which failed, and he was imprisoned more rigorously than before; but his wife, having got released from prison, was enabled to join him; and at last, when Bona-

parte had become powerful, and had beaten Austria, the French government gave orders to him to insist that Austria should give up all the French prisoners at Olmutz, as one of the conditions of peace ; and on the 25th of August, 1797, he was released, after an imprisonment of five years, twenty-two months of which were shared by his wife and daughters.

“ One of his estates in France, La Grange, had not been confiscated ; and, after a short time, he established himself there. Bonaparte had not then become emperor, but was called the *first consul*. He offered Lafayette a place under his government ; but when Bonaparte caused himself to be made consul for life, Lafayette, who was a senator, voted against it, and wrote a letter to Bonaparte. Bonaparte was very selfish, and he did not like one so noble and disinterested as Lafayette ; and he, finding that his hopes were disappointed, retired from public life, to his farm at La Grange.

“ After the Bourbon family were restored, he was made a member of the chamber of deputies, and did what he could for the liberty of his country.

“ When Lafayette had become old, he felt

a desire to visit America, and, see how things went on in a country where he had passed so much time in the early part of his life, and where he had made such great exertions for the good of the people. He accordingly took passage in a ship at Havre, and arrived in safety in New York, in August, 1824. He was received with the greatest marks of joy, and from there passed over the whole of the United States. Wherever he went, he was received by the whole people, who went out to meet him. Processions, triumphal arches, addresses, dinners, suppers, military parades, all marks of public rejoicing that could be shown, were displayed on the occasion. When he was obliged to ride in the evening, whole tracts of woods were lighted up, and made brilliant as day. Frequently old veterans of the revolution came from great distances to shake hands with him. He always appeared to recollect these, his old companions in arms, and showed marks of great feeling at seeing them. While he was here, he assisted in a great ceremony, which took place in laying the cornerstone of the Bunker Hill Monument. After having passed a year in visiting every part of the United States, and having received from the Congress a present of a large tract of land,

and a large sum of money, he proposed to return home. The government of the United States prepared a ship-of-war, named the Brandywine, after the place where the battle was fought in which he was wounded, to carry him home. A great many young men, who were midshipmen in the navy, wished very much to have permission to go this voyage with Lafayette; so the government allowed one from each of the twenty-four states to go. Lafayette was very kind to these young men, and I dare say they will always remember the voyage with pleasure. After his return, they had another revolution in France. The king, who had not done as much for the liberties of the people as they desired, was sent away. There was a new charter formed, and a new constitution, and Lafayette again took part in public affairs; and this time things went on rather more to his mind. They chose a new king, a relation of the former king, but the son of a man who had been on the side of liberty in the old revolution. The new king, Louis Philippe, duke of Orleans, in his youth had been banished from France, during the revolutionary troubles, and had suffered great privations. At one time, he was in America, and was, before that,

in Switzerland, obliged to keep a school for his living. Now, beside being king of France, he has recovered his estates, and is one of the richest men in Europe. At last, Lafayette died, at a good old age, and was lamented by the good all over the world, and most deeply by the people of America. He died in the year 1834."

FRANK. "I thank you, papa, for this story. I shall like very much to read a life of Lafayette when I am old enough."

MR. MILTON. "There is a very good life of this great man, written on purpose for young people, which you will read, I dare say, with great interest, even now. It will tell you a great deal more than I have had time to do in this short conversation, and you will find it highly interesting."

One evening, Mr. Milton, with the young people, had been to ride, and, on returning through a little wood, were much amused by the note of the little insect well known under the name of *Katy-did*. It seemed as if there were several of them exerting all their powers to say "Katy-did;" and now and then the note would be a little varied, and the children protested that another was so rude as to reply that "Katy did'nt." After they returned

home, Mrs. Milton looked for Dr. Holmes's poems, and found the lines addressed by him to this insect, which were read for the amusement of the company.

"TO AN INSECT.

"I love to hear thine earnest voice,
Wherever thou art hid,
Thou testy little dogmatist,
Thou pretty Katy-did!
Thou 'mindst me of gentle-folks, —
Old gentle-folks are they, —
Thou say'st an undisputed thing,
In such a solemn way.

"Thou art a female, Katy-did!
I know it by the trill
That quivers through thy piercing notes,
So petulant and shrill.
I think there is a knot of you
Beneath the hollow tree, —
A knot of spinster Katy-dids.
Do Katy-dids drink tea?

"O, tell me where did Katy live,
And what did Katy do?
And was she very fair and young,
And yet so wicked too?
Did Katy love a naughty man,
Or kiss more cheeks than one?
I warrant Katy did no more
Than many a Kate has done.

"Dear me ! I'll tell you all about
My fuss with little Jane
And Ann, with whom I used to walk
So often down the lane,
And all that tore their locks of black,
Or wet their eyes of blue.
Pray tell me, sweetest Katy-did,
What did poor Katy do ?

"Ah, no ! the living oak shall crash,
That stood for ages still,
The rock shall rend its mossy base,
And thunder down the hill,
Before the little Katy-did
Shall add one word, to tell
The mystic story of the maid
Whose name she knows so well.

"Peace to the ever-murmuring race !
And when the latest one
Shall fold in death her feeble wings
Beneath the autumn sun,
Then shall she raise her fainting voice,
And lift her drooping lid,
And then the child of future years
Shall tell what Katy did."

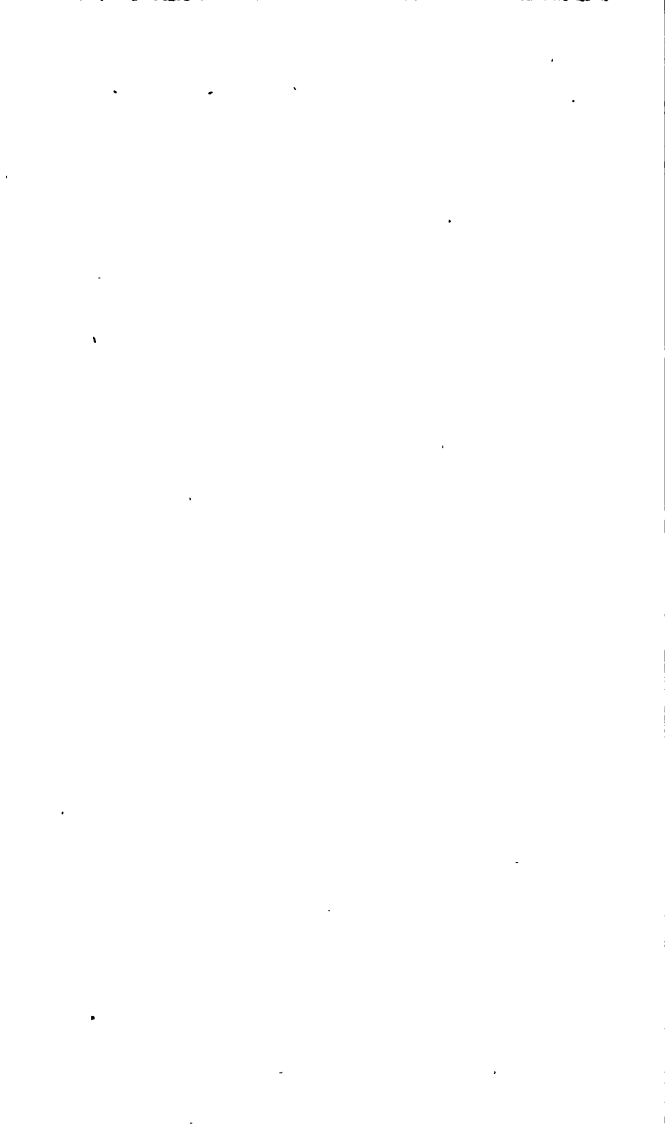
The garden was brilliant now, but did not abound with fragrant flowers. There were the large and showy china asters, variegated euphorbia, scarlet malope, purple and yellow

immortal flower, the purple and white amaranthus, the cock's-comb, and many others. The sweet alyssum and the sweet pea added fragrance to their pretty appearance. The dahlias were this year very abundant, and made a fine show until the frost; but they were forced to bow their heads at the first approach of this cruel enemy.

The young people still continued their botanical walks with their kind neighbor. There were not many very attractive field-flowers, however, at this season. Few of them retained any fragrance. There were a great variety of the aster family, (class 19th, order 2d.) The showy family of *Solidago*, or golden-rod, of the same class and order, were also abundant. There were remaining some of the *Hibiscus Palustris*, marsh hibiscus, (class 16th, order 8th,) which blossomed at the close of the last month, and whose brilliant red flowers, at a little distance, looked like roses. The *Althea Officinalis*, marsh-mallow, of the same class, blossomed this month. These, with some others, made up very showy bouquets, and the young people enjoyed their excursions very highly, and looked forward with pain to the

approaching cold weather, when the fields would be covered with snow, and they should be forced to confine their botanical researches to the beautiful "monsters" of the greenhouse.









OCTOBER.

THE mornings and evenings had now become very cold, and even in the middle of the day it was not often agreeable to sit with the windows open. But the weather, in general, was very clear and pleasant — the finest in the whole year for active exercise. Mr. Milton's family were much in the open air. In their rides they sometimes saw the sportsmen creeping cautiously along with their guns, to shoot the game, which was very abundant at this season. Mr. Milton was no sportsman himself, and, though the boys were not without that fondness for using a gun, which seems almost a natural feeling with young men, yet they had been indulged enough in the exercise to cause it to lose its novelty, and they now generally preferred those amusements in which their sisters could join them. They had also taken so much pleasure in watching the birds, through the summer, that they felt

acquainted with the whole feathered tribe, and had little disposition to make war upon them. Though the fruits were, for the most part, gathered, and there were few flowers that were very pretty, yet they always found something to interest them in their long walks. The chief business of nature, at this season, as far as concerns the vegetable world, appears to be dissemination. Plants, having gone through the progressive stages of springing, flowering, and seeding, have at length brought to maturity the rudiments of a future progeny, which are now to be deposited in the bosom of the earth. This being done, the parent vegetable, if of the herbaceous kind, either totally perishes, or dies down to the root ; if a tree, or shrub, it casts all those tender leaves that the spring and summer had put forth. Seeds are scattered by the hand of nature in various ways. Those of them which are furnished with plumes, or wings, are dispersed far and wide by the high winds, which arise about this time. Hence plants with such seeds are, of all others, the most generally to be met with ; as dandelions, thistles, &c. Others, by means of hooks, with which they are furnished, lay hold of passing animals, and are thus carried to distant places. The

common burs are examples of this contrivance. Some other seeds, when ripe, are thrown out, with considerable force, from their seed vessels, by means of a strong, spiral, elastic spring, of which the *impatiens*, or touch-me-not, is a specimen. Many seeds are contained in berries, which being eaten by birds, the seeds are discharged again uninjured, and grow where they happen to light. Thus has nature carefully provided for the propagation and wide distribution of her vegetable offspring.

Nuts of various kinds had become ripe, and the frosts had opened the external covering, and permitted the nut to drop out. The squirrels were very busy in laying up their store for the winter. Near the window where Mrs. Milton usually sat at work, stood a large walnut tree. She had frequently observed the squirrels very busily running up and down the tree; and at last she perceived that they not only worked diligently, but with considerable contrivance. It was a long journey from the top to the bottom of this tree for the poor little squirrel to run with each separate nut, and this the little creatures found out. One would sit on the branch, and gnaw off the nut with his teeth, while another sat at the

foot of the tree, to receive it as it fell, and carry it away to the place where they concealed their winter store. The squirrels did not wait till the bur opened, but began to lay up their store before this time. When it became necessary, a short time after, to repair an old fence near the foot of this tree, a large quantity of nuts was found stored away there, covered with leaves. Thus had the diligent little squirrels provided for themselves a store for the winter. Care was taken to disturb their deposit as little as possible.

The family of Mr. Milton made an excursion one day into the woods to gather nuts. After one or two frosty nights had opened the outer covering of the nut, on a pleasant morning they took a ride to a wood not far distant. Some of the fruit had fallen to the ground, but the boys took pleasure in mounting the branches of the trees, and by means of a stick with a hook at the end, and shaking the branches, they succeeded in filling several pretty sizable bags. They had an agreeable ride home, and the nuts were spread out on the floor of the fruit-chamber that they might dry, and become more fit for eating.

In the evening, when the children were talking over the events of the day, around a

cheerful fire, which had become quite necessary at night, Frank said, "Sister Eleanor, do you not remember that funny story you read to me once, about the cock chanticleer and his wife, who went to gather nuts? Would you be so kind as to read it to me again?"

Eleanor complied with the request of Frank, and read the story of

"THE COCK CHANTICLEER AND HIS WIFE
PONDOSA.

" 'The nuts are all ripe now,' said the Cock Chanticleer to his wife Pondosa. 'What if we should go to eat some, before the squirrel has devoured them all?' — 'With all my heart!' said the hen Pondosa; 'come, let us enjoy together this holiday.'

"They went then to the mountains, and, as the weather was fine, they staid there till evening. Either because they had eaten so many nuts that they could not walk, or they were lazy, or for some other reason, which we are ignorant of, they took it into their heads that they would not come back on foot. Cock Chanticleer began to build a little carriage with nut-shells; and when it was finished, hen Pondosa jumped in, and begged Chanti-

cleer to draw her, that she might ride home. 'You are joking,' said Chanticleer; 'I shall do no such thing. If you please, I will get in for the coachman; but I will not draw the carriage.' At this moment there came along a duck, who cried out to them, 'Thieves! vagabonds! what are you doing on my estate? I will punish you for your insolence!' and she fell upon Chanticleer with great violence; but the latter was no coward, and returned her blows so lustily that the duck begged for mercy, which was granted her on condition that she should drag the carriage. She consented to it. Chanticleer got up into the carriage, and drove it off, crying, 'Now, duck, go as quick as you can!' and off they rode at a pretty pace.

"They had not gone far, when they met a needle and a pin, who were walking together along the road. The needle cried out, 'Stop, stop!' She told them that it was so dark and dirty, that they could hardly find their way. She said her friend, the pin, had drank so much at a tavern a little way off, that they had forgotten how late it was; and she begged the travellers to be so kind as to let them have room in their carriage. Cock Chanticleer, observing that they were slim, and therefore would not

take up much room, permitted them to mount, making them promise that they would not dirt the wheels of the carriage, as they got in, nor tread on Pondosa's toes. They reached a tavern late at night ; and as it was dark, and difficult for them to see the way, and the duck seemed to be tired, they concluded to stay there for the night. The master of the house refused at first to receive them, not liking their looks ; but they spoke very politely, made him a present of the egg Pondosa had just laid on the way, and promised to give him the duck, who was in the habit of laying one every day. At last he let them come in. They called for a good supper, and passed the evening very pleasantly.

“ Before daylight, and when every body was asleep in the tavern, Cock Chanticleer waked up his wife. He took the egg which she had laid, made a hole in the shell, ate the inside of it, and threw the shell into the chimney-corner. They went to find the needle and pin, who were sound asleep. He seized them by the head, stuck one into the great arm-chair of the master of the tavern, and the other into his pocket-handkerchief. Then they glided out of the tavern as quietly as

possible. The duck, who was asleep in the open air, in the yard, heard them coming, and, jumping into the stream which flowed by the side of the house, she escaped from their pursuit.

“An hour or two after, the master of the tavern got up, and took his handkerchief to wipe his face; but the needle pricked him sadly. Then he went into the kitchen to light his pipe at the fire; but as he was blowing, the egg-shell snapped up into his eyes, so as to make him almost blind. ‘Dear me,’ said he, ‘every thing goes against me, this morning.’ As he said this, he threw himself sadly into his great arm-chair, and the pin gave him a terrible prick. He grew very angry, and, suspecting the company who came in the night before, he ran to look for his new guests; but they had all gone, and he vowed he would never again receive such a troop of vagabonds, who ate a great deal, paid nothing at all, and in return for his trouble only played him wicked tricks.

“As Cock Chanticleer and his wife were on their way home, they concluded they would eat a few more nuts; and they resolved that all they found should be equally divided be-

tween them. The hen found, however, a very fine nut. She said nothing about it to the cock, but kept it all to herself. It was so large that she could not swallow it, and it stuck in her throat. Seized with fear, she cried out to the cock, 'I pray you run as quick as you can, and bring me some water, or I shall choke.'

"Chanticleer ran directly to the river, and said, 'River, give me some water; for my wife is under a nut-tree, and she will be choked by a great nut.' The river said, 'Go and ask the bride to give you a silk cord to draw up some water.' The cock ran to her, and said, 'Bride, give me a silk cord to draw up some water, to carry to the hen, who is under the nut-tree, and who is almost choked with a great nut.' The bride said, 'Run into the garden and find my thread-case, which is hanging on a willow.' And the cock ran to bring the thread-case, which was hanging on a willow, and he brought it to the bride, who gave him the silken cord. He carried it to the river, which gave him the water, which he carried to his wife; but during this long time, the hen had choked with the great nut, and was lying dead. So poor Chanticleer dug a grave for Pondosa, and made a little hillock over it, and

sat down and cried over her, and at last he died also."

"That is a nice story," said Frank. "I always wished there was more about the travels of Cock Chanticleer and his wife."

Eleanor thought she should not have cared to read much more, unless they had been wiser; but she owned that a little of such nonsense did not come amiss once in a while.

Dr. Solander came in soon after. He had brought with him a pretty specimen of the fringed gentian, (class 5th, order 2d,) and in return for it, he desired Sophia to read to him Bryant's pretty lines to

"THE FRINGED GENTIAN.

"Thou blossom, bright with autumn dew,
And colored with the heaven's own blue,
That openest when the quiet light
Succeeds the keen and frosty night; —

"Thou comest not when violets lean
O'er wandering brooks and springs unseen,
Or columbines, in scarlet dressed,
Nod o'er the ground-bird's hidden nest.

"Thou waitest late, and com'st alone
When woods are bare and birds are flown,

And frosts and shortening days portend
The aged year is near its end.

“Then doth thy sweet and quiet eye
Look through its fringes to the sky,
Blue — blue — as if that sky let fall
A flower from its cerulean wall.

“I would that thus, when I shall see
The hour of death draw near to me,
Hope, blossoming within my heart,
May look to heaven as I depart.”

These lines were pronounced very pretty, and very appropriate to the beautiful flower to which they were dedicated.

Beside the fringed gentian, there were two or three other kinds of the same family, all very pretty. The asters and solidago, with the gentians, were almost the only field-flowers of this month.

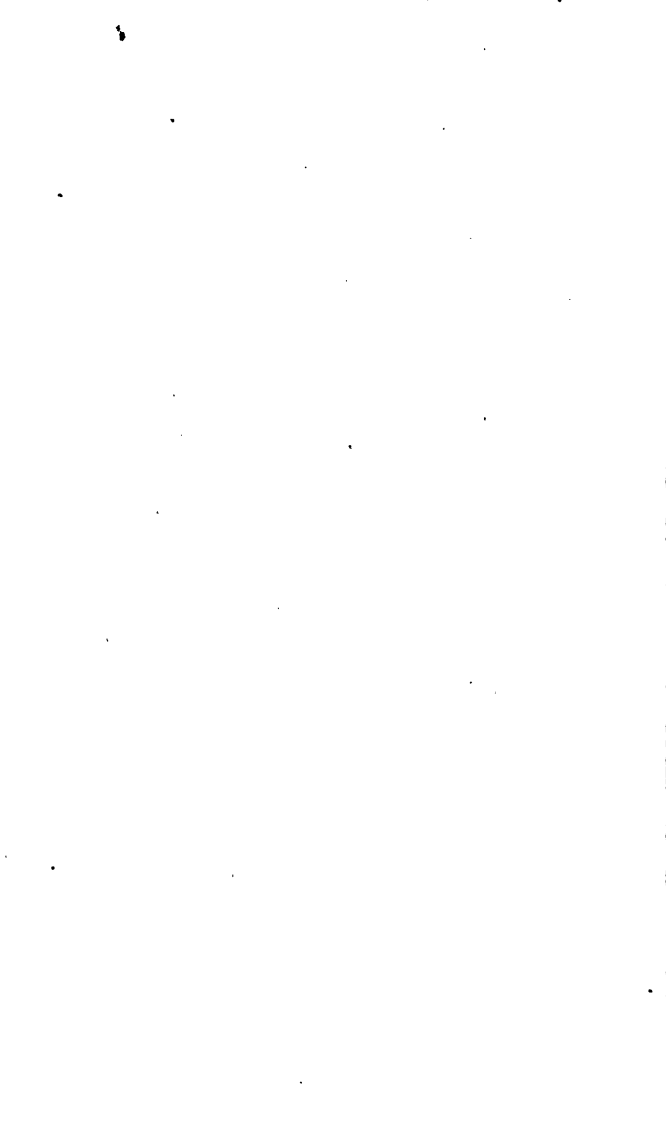
In the garden the chrysanthemums made quite a show, and there were still china asters and marigolds. The brilliant and gaudy colors of most of the plants at this season seem to look like a last effort of nature. It had become so cold, however, that the young people did not linger much about the garden, except to gather the seeds of annuals which had

ripened. These they put carefully up in little paper bags, and wrote upon them the name and the time, when they were gathered.

There were some bulbous roots to be planted this month. The lilies, crown imperials, and peonies, had been planted in August. Holes were dug one foot and a half deep, and filled with a previously prepared compost of one third fine river sand, one third decayed scrapings of the cow-yard, and one third well-rotted pasture turf.

The polyanthos, narcissus, peonies, crown imperials, and lilies, were planted five inches deep from the top of the bulb ; hyacinths, four inches ; tulips and jonquilles, three inches ; and crocuses and snow-drops, two inches.

The fine, clear weather, which prevails through this month and the beginning of the next, is called, in New England, the Indian Summer, and is perhaps, on the whole, the most healthful and pleasant weather of any part of the year.





NOVEMBER.

THE weather was now, for the most part, blustering and cold, or dark, damp, and rainy. The children of the Milton family, who were so full of youth and gay spirits that all seasons were alike to them, contrived, however, to make even this gloomy month, — which in England is said to be so dismal that it is difficult to prevent people from hanging themselves, — they managed to make even this month lively and pleasant. They had heard of the festival of husking the corn, which used to be very frequent in the interior of New England, and continues to be observed in some parts of it until now. They begged their mother to let them have a husking frolic. The consent of the elders having been obtained, the large barn-chamber was nicely swept out and prepared for the occasion ; the neighbors, young

and old, were invited, the barn was lighted up, and, for a short time after the company were assembled, all hands were employed in stripping the husks from the ears of the Indian corn. Many hands make light work, and in a short time the corn was husked, or as much of it as was thought necessary to give the party a title to the name of *husking party*. There were several sources of merriment peculiar to parties of this kind, which were drawn upon at this time. Among others, any lady who happened, in stripping off the husks, to discover that hers was a *red* ear of corn, took great care to conceal it, as, according to the old usage on these occasions, each gentleman had a right to claim a kiss from the lady who held the red ear. It was a chance that, in trying to hide the ear, she might be discovered, in which case considerable laughing and joking ensued. This and several other jokes of the kind prevented the husking from being merely dull labor. After the husking was over, they played blind man's buff and other sports of the kind, and finished by having a good merry dance to the music of old Johnny Two-string's fiddle. The dance being over, the party

were invited into the house to partake of a plentiful supper, in the enjoyment of which they finished the evening.

The hard frosts at the beginning of this month had destroyed nearly all the flowers. A few marigolds, and now and then a china aster, the immortal flower, and some blossoms of the heart's-ease, were about all that remained.

The dahlia stalks having been cut off near the ground, the roots were carefully dug, and laid on a shelf in a warm, dry cellar.

All the flower-stalks were cut off, and at the close of the month the perennials were covered with pine boughs, to secure them from the piercing cold of December. There was but little to interest the children this month in the garden or fields. The verdure of the meadows faded, the flowers perished, and the trees were stripped of their foliage.

George brought, one day, into the house, a branch of the witch-hazel, *Hamamelis Virginica*, (class 4th, order 2d.) At this season, among the crimson and yellow hues of the falling leaves, there is no more remarkable object than this plant, in the moment of parting with its foliage, putting forth a profusion of gaudy, yellow blossoms, and giving to No-

vember the counterfeited appearance of spring. It is a bushy tree, sending up a number of oblique trunks, about the size of a man's arm, or larger.

Sophia asked why this plant had received the name of *witch-hazel*.

MR. MILTON. "I suppose, on account of its having been used formerly by some people, who pretended, by means of it, to discover springs of water, or mines. They used to go to the spot in the neighborhood of which they expected to find a mine, holding in their hand a rod of this plant. This rod they held in a peculiar manner, and used to pretend that the rod would turn and point to the spring or mine, if there were any in the neighborhood. Of course, you know, this could be only pretence; but ignorant people were sometimes deceived by it."

Some one made the remark, one day, that a solitary leaf left hanging on a branch, might very well be compared to an aged man who had survived all the companions of his youth, and was awaiting the same fate which had taken them away from the earth, to carry him to join them.

Eleanor observed that among the poems of

Dr. Holmes were some lines framed upon this idea, which were very pretty. She was desired to read them.

"THE LAST LEAF.

- "I saw him once before
As he passed by the door,
And again
The pavement stones resound
As he totters o'er the ground
With his cane.
- "They say that in his prime,
Ere the pruning-knife of Time
Cut him down,
Not a better man was found,
By the Crier on his round
Through the town.
- "But now he walks the streets,
And he looks at all he meets
Sad and wan;
And he shakes his feeble head,
That it seems as if he said,
'They are gone!'
- "The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that he has prest
In their bloom;
And the names he loved to hear
Have been carved for many a year
On the tomb.

"My grandmamma has said —
Poor old lady! she is dead
Long ago —
That he had a Roman nose,
And his cheek was like a rose
In the snow.

"But now his nose is thin,
And it rests upon his chin
Like a staff;
And a crook is in his back,
And a melancholy crack
In his laugh.

"I know it is a sin
For me to sit and grin
At him here;
But the old three-cornered hat,
And the breeches, and all that,
Are so queer!

"And if I should live to be
The last leaf upon the tree,
In the spring,
Let them smile, as I do now,
At the old, forsaken bough
Where I cling."

The Thanksgiving, that festival peculiar for many years to New England, came round this month. Great stores of pastry were prepared for this occasion. Mrs. Milton liked to man-

age this matter in the way she had been accustomed to in her early years. She had no objections to relinquish the preparations for a common dinner party into the hands of Mrs. N., or some of the others of her profession, who have sprung up, to the great relief of the mistress of a family on these occasions, which formerly tried women's souls, and through them, perhaps, those of their husbands; but there were parts of the preparation for this festival which she never allowed any other than her own hands to make, and the general supervisorship of the whole she retained in her own person, calling in the assistance of one or two stout damsels and that of her two daughters. The invitations, according to the old custom, though rarely extending beyond the circle of family connections, were sent out a fortnight before the day. The week previous was devoted to the preparation of all the various kinds of pastry, which were common before French cookery was so much used among us. There was the mince pie, and the apple pie, the squash, pumpkin, and cranberry pie, the Marlborough and plum pudding. Every thing that could possibly be prepared the night before, was put in order, that there might be

as little manual labor in store for the day of the feast as possible, and as few hands as might be detained from attending church, which, in former days, was thought a part of the festival not to be passed lightly over. Mrs. Milton used to say that, when she was young, it was considered the greatest disgrace for a lady to be absent from church on Thanksgiving day; and in families where there were but few domestics kept, the mistress would sometimes prepare the dinner over night, that all the women and girls of the family might be able to go out. And this feeling was so universal, that it was impossible, almost, to find a woman, in country towns, willing, even among those who went out to work on other occasions, to go into a family to cook for that day. The appearance of the churches at the present time, seems to prove that the custom, in this respect, has somewhat changed. Early in the day, the cousins and family connections arrived. Those too young to attend church, were deposited with their respective nurses in the capacious nursery of Mrs. Milton, which still retained its name and agreeable associations for the children, though they had all grown too old to be confined there. The

older members of the family repaired in proper season to church, well wrapped up, to guard against the cold of the season. At the close of public worship, they all returned home, and soon were ready to assemble in the drawing-room. At dinner, there was always an immense chicken pie and roast turkey: the rest of the dishes were left to the taste and convenience of the mistress; but these were always considered indispensable. Every child expected to taste each of the varieties of pie and pudding. The party was generally so large, that it was necessary to arrange a side-table for the young people, at which Sophia Milton presided, and contrived, by her good humor and good judgment, to retain within due bounds the exuberant vivacity of the youthful party. The afternoon and evening were devoted to conversation among the older part of the company, which was sometimes interrupted by a rush into the room of the children, to tell of some very entertaining exploit in the nursery, or perhaps to exhibit themselves rigged up in some odd fashion, to make the folks laugh. In the evening, a game at blind man's buff, or a cotillion or country dance to the piano, occupied the time until an early supper, which

all the children who were of any size were allowed to share ; after which the party dispersed.

It may perhaps be not amiss to record with such minuteness the manner in which the Miltons passed the Thanksgiving day, since the old fashions about such things seem to be fast passing away. The Thanksgiving is retained, it is true. There is a yearly proclamation, urging people to observe it religiously and solemnly, and the churches are opened ; but the congregations are small. In some families, there is a formal dinner party ; in others, but little notice is taken of the day, and some people have grown so cold-hearted as to neglect to make even one MINCE PIE.

The month of November was marked formerly in England as being the period of the celebrated Gunpowder Plot. This was a supposed attempt, on the part of the Catholics, to blow up the Parliament House, where was sitting the Protestant Parliament. Mrs. Milton said her grandmother used to tell them that the 5th of November, the day this plot was discovered, used to be celebrated in Boston, when she was young, and the country was under the government of the British. The people would on this day dress up a figure,

which they called a *pope*, and carry it round in a cart, and stop at each house, calling for money. They sang a song, a part of which ran thus : —

“O don’t you remember
The fifth of November,
The gunpowder treason and plot?
And I don’t see the reason
Why gunpowder treason
Should ever be forgot.”

They would then ring a bell, and say,

“Chink, chink, chink!
Give me a little money
To buy my pope some drink.”

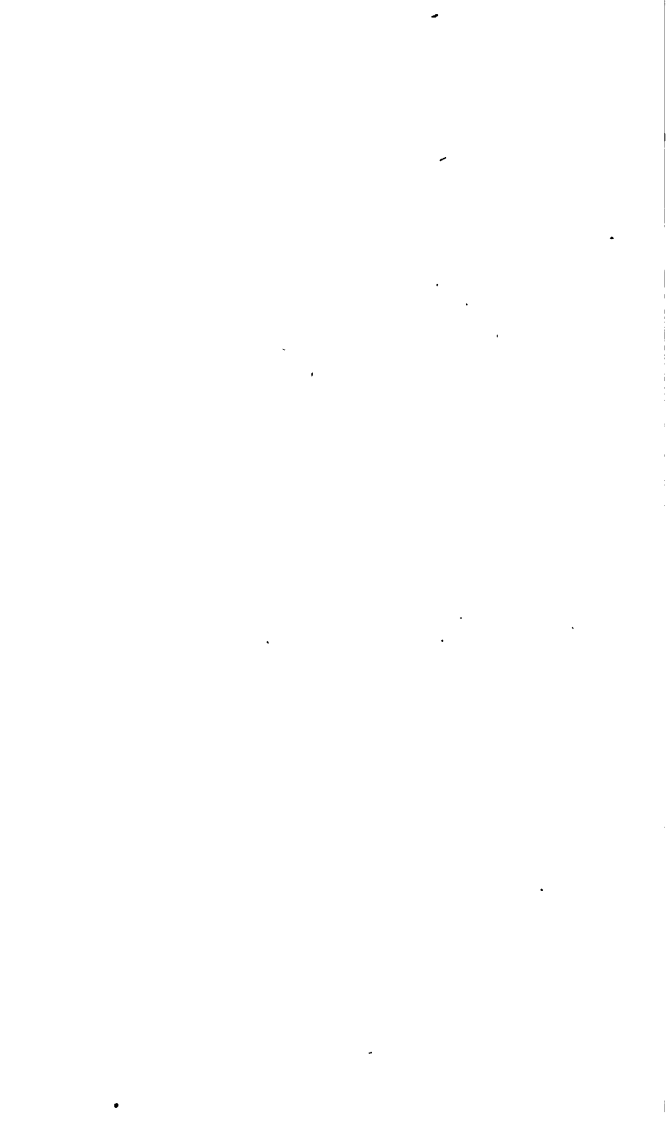
After having driven the pope round the town in this manner, and collected what money they could, the procession went to the mill-pond, which is now filled up, and covered with streets, and made a bonfire of the pope, drinking and carousing at the same time.

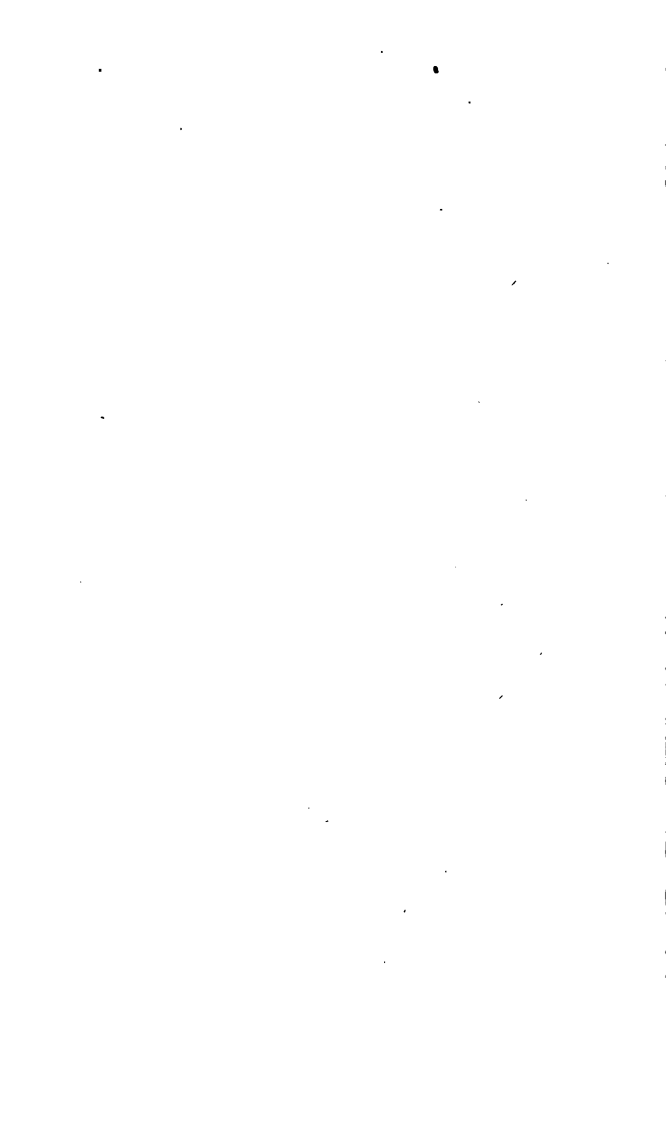
The boys of the day would, in imitation of their elders, dress up popes on a smaller scale, and go round in the same way, singing and collecting money, and at last making a bonfire.

Cousin Grace had returned home to her residence in the city a month or two before this time. Eleanor received a letter from her, in which she expressed the regret she felt at leaving Mrs. Milton's family, and told her how much she missed their pleasant walks and rides. She had begun, however, to get a little interested in the pursuits and occupations of the winter. She was attending a school where there were a number of very agreeable young ladies of about her own age, and twice a week she went to dancing-school, which she found very pleasant. She had been once to the theatre; but it was an amusement which her mother did not think best she should often enjoy, on account of the late hours which accompanied it, which rather interfered with her rising in proper season for school the next morning. There had been two or three very pleasant evening parties among young ladies of her own age, which she had enjoyed very highly. They had not yet reached the period when young ladies are reckoned as in company, and therefore must not go to make visits until nine or ten o'clock in the evening. Grace's friends usually met at seven, and retired by ten. In this way they enjoyed three hours of pleas-

ant intercourse and dancing, and were able to go to bed in good season. She missed the walks, and the sliding and coasting, which she had enjoyed so much with her cousins last winter; but by taking a walk, two or three times a day, round the Common, she managed to keep herself in good health and spirits.

As the field and garden flowers were now gone, Dr. Solander again had recourse to his green-house, which always furnished a beautiful and fragrant variety. The geraniums, roses, and myrtles, never failed; and he had, each month, something new and beautiful to add to these. The long winter evenings were found very favorable to reading and study. Dr. Solander often joined the circle at that time, and his fragrant bouquet added to the pleasures of the evening. While listening to some one who read aloud from an interesting and instructive book, the party forgot that the evening was long, and that the cold wind and storm were raging without doors.







DECEMBER.

THE ground was now covered with snow, and the merry jingling of the sleigh-bells could be every hour heard. The ponds were frozen over with thick ice, and the boys entered with great pleasure into the amusement of skating. On the coldest days, after having exercised themselves in this way for some time, they would find themselves in a perfect glow.

At this season, several of the wild quadrupeds have taken to their winter concealments, which they seldom or never quit through the winter. Of these, some are in an absolutely torpid or sleeping state, taking no food for a considerable time : others are only drowsy and inactive, and continue to feed on provisions which they have hoarded up. Bats become torpid, and retire early to caves and holes, where they remain the whole winter, suspended by the hind feet, and closely wrapped up in the membranes of the fore feet. As their

food is chiefly insects, they can lay up no store for the winter, and therefore must be starved, did not nature thus render food unnecessary for them. Squirrels, and various kinds of field mice, provide magazines of food against the winter, but are not known to become torpid.

On the twenty-first of December happens the winter solstice, or shortest day, when the sun is something less than eight hours above the horizon. Eleanor and Sophia had accepted an invitation from cousin Grace to spend a few weeks with her in New York at Christmas time. The following letter from Sophia will give some account of the manner they passed their time there :

"New York, Dec. 28, 183—.

"My dear Mother,

"We arrived here safely, after a very short and pleasant journey, and were very kindly received by aunt Belknap and cousin Grace. We have passed our time very pleasantly since we have been here, and seen a great many things which are new to us ; but one of the oddest things we have met with is the frolic they have here the night before Christ-

mas. You must know that it is the fashion here for every body to hang up their stockings the night before Christmas, and it is expected that St. Nicholas, or St. 'Eclaus, as he is familiarly called, will come down chimney and fill the stockings with gifts—pretty presents for the good, a rod for the naughty. Every body, you know, likes to make a present to their friends at Christmas; so each one here made or purchased what he liked, and having directed it as he wished it to be disposed of, put it into the hands of my aunt, who was to act the part of St. Nicholas;—and I am so faithless, I do not believe that without such an arrangement the stockings would ever be filled. Well, these preparatory steps being taken, we children all went to bed, having previously prevailed on Alice, the chamber-maid, to hang up a stocking for aunt and uncle, that we might fill them before we retired. Every body put out a stocking at his door, signifying by a label who it belonged to. The little children waked very early, and crawled out of bed; but they were only puzzled; for they could only feel that they had something, and could not discover what. They were obliged to lie down and take another nap. We, who were older,

were more philosophical, and waited till a proper time to get up, when, having dressed ourselves, we penetrated the recesses of the stockings, and found several very pretty gifts from different members of the family. At breakfast, we compared our presents, and laughed over the adventures of the morning. They say that some families, to avoid the inconveniences of so many stockings, hang up a great bag, and St. 'Eclaus is so obliging as to put his presents, properly directed, into the bag. I have seen a very pretty piece of poetry about it, which I transcribe, thinking you may like to have it read aloud in the evening for the benefit of the boys and good Dr. Solander.

“‘A VISIT FROM ST. NICHOLAS.

“‘Twas the night before Christmas, when, all through the house,

Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.

The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,

In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there.

The children were nestled, all snug in their beds,

While visions of sugar-plums danced through their heads ;

And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,

Had just settled our brains for a long winter nap,

When, out on the lawn, there arose such a clatter,
I sprung from the bed, to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters, and threw up the sash.
The moon, on the breast of the new-fallen snow,
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below,—
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer,
With a little old driver, so lively and quick:
I knew in a moment, it must be St. Nick.
More rapid than eagles, his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by
name.

“Now Darker, now Dancer. now Prancer. now Vixen!
On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, Donner and Blixen!
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!
Now dash away, dash away, dash away all!”
As leaves, that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky,
So up to the house-top the coursers they flew,
With the sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas too;
And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.
He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot.
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a pedler, just opening his pack.
His eyes, how they twinkled! his dimples, how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry.
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard on his chin was as white as the snow.

The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke, it encircled his head like a wreath.
He had a broad face, and a little round belly,
Which shook, when he laughed, like a bowl full of jelly.

He was chubby and plump — a right jolly old elf;
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself.
A wink of his eye, and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know, I had nothing to dread.
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he goes.
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew, like the down of a thistle;
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,
“Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night!”

“I have seen a very pretty picture, drawn from these lines, which represents St. 'Eclaus at the moment he is taking his leave. It is painted by Mr. Weir, and represents the subject very well. All this matter of St. Nicholas was very amusing to us. I had heard of the thing before. You recollect when our kind cousin Van der Trop brought some gifts the night before Christmas, and desired you to put them into our stockings, as presents from St. Nicholas. He said it was a custom derived from the Dutch, who were the first settlers of

New York ; but I had never been in a family where the thing was carried on with so much spirit.

“ I have written so much about St. Nicholas, that I have not left myself room to tell you of any thing else I have seen here ; but Eleanor will write to you in a few days, and acquaint you with her movements, and those of your affectionate daughter

SOPHIA.”

On the 22d of December, which is celebrated at Plymouth as Pilgrims' Day, — or the day the Pilgrim fathers arrived at Plymouth, — the conversation at Mr. Milton's naturally turned on this subject ; and George read the following short account of their first landing : —

“ It is now about two hundred years since the first settlers of New England landed at Plymouth. Before that time, a few voyagers and fishermen had touched upon this part of the North American continent, but none had remained. Thick forests darkened the places that are now crowded with happy villages. Waters, which are now ploughed by mighty ships, laden with the productions of far distant countries, were then only disturbed by the frail

and silent canoe of the Indian. Places now busy with the hum of active and laborious industry, were the solitary hunting-grounds of an indolent and savage race. In 1620, a small vessel, called the *May-flower*, was beating about in the stormy sea, on an unknown coast. On board this vessel were strong men, with their wives and tender children. They had fled with all that they loved from England, their native country, because they had been persecuted for refusing to comply with certain religious forms and ceremonies. They preferred to live in a desert, where they could worship God in peace and in simplicity. On the 22d of December, the wave-driven Pilgrims landed, and resolved to commence a settlement. A large fragment of the rock on which they first stepped is still preserved, as a sacred memorial of this event. They chose Mr. John Carver for their governor, and named the spot which they had resolved to make their home, *New Plymouth*. The season which followed was comfortless and severe to them. The fatigue and suffering to which they were exposed, caused much sickness. Many of their number died. The survivors were filled with sorrow for the loss of their friends, and anxiety

for their own fate. By good fortune, the spring was an early one, and brought a welcome relief from the chill blasts of winter.

“ It was not till after some months, that the white men spoke with a native of the country. They knew that it was inhabited by savage tribes ; they had sometimes seen a few Indians at a distance, and had once been visited by a shower of arrows. On the 16th of March, 1621, they were surprised by the sudden approach of an Indian. He advanced boldly alone into the street of Plymouth, and exclaimed, ‘ Welcome, Englishmen ! ’ They were much astonished to hear him speak in their own language. He told them that he had learned it from the fishermen who had sometimes been on the coast. He informed them, that all the inhabitants of the place where they were seated had died, about four years before, of an extraordinary plague. He also told them that his name was Samoset, and that he was the chief of a tribe. Samoset was a tall, straight man, with black hair, short before, but hanging long behind. He had a bow and two arrows. The Pilgrims received him kindly, and gave him some biscuit and butter, cheese, pudding, and a piece of roast duck. The chief

was quite pleased with his treat, and in return told the new comers a great many useful things. The next day, Samoset paid them a visit, with five other natives. Some of them were clothed in deer-skins. Some wore long stockings, that covered the whole leg, and pieces of leather about their waists. The chief was distinguished by having the skin of a wild-cat about his arm. They were tall men, with long, black hair, stuck full of feathers, and painted to the excess of their fashion. After eating and drinking heartily with the English, they amused them by some Indian dances and songs." — *Robin Carver's History of Boston.*

Mr. Milton remarked, that, among the Indians who visited Boston last year, was one who, in his speech at the State House, said that he was a descendant of one of the tribes who inhabited the region about Plymouth at the time of the arrival of the Pilgrims; and that he had heard his grandfather tell about the arrival of this colony, the story of which he had heard from his ancestors. This poor Indian could not but remark upon the difference of things now and then. In 1620, these five Indians, though they came peacefully,

were probably regarded with some anxiety, and perhaps terror, since it might well be supposed that they belonged to a larger company of savages, who could, if they pleased, fall upon the weak band of the Pilgrims. In 1837, came a large number of Indians, as a deputation from a distant part of the country. But the descendants of the English were now strong and powerful. They were living in their comfortable houses; they had every thing that could be wished. They received the poor Indians, and spoke kindly to them. They looked at their fantastic dresses with curiosity and wonder; but there was no thought of fear in any heart. But when they thought of what the Indians were then, and what our fathers were, and what were these Indians, and in what situation are the children of the Pilgrims, — the heart must have been truly insensible, which could refrain from thanking God for his wonderful protection of this feeble company of strangers, — which he had upheld till it had become a mighty nation, — and at the same time avoid feeling pity for the poor tribes of the forest who, for some reason unknown to us, God had seen fit to allow to waste away.

Dr. Solander brought in his usual bouquet. The roses, and geraniums, and the mignonette, still held their places. He had some fine stock gilly-flowers, which were also very fragrant. He had a specimen of the cactus tribe, (class 12th, order 1st.) He told them that this was the kind on which the cochineal insect feeds, which is used in dyeing. It is called the *Cactus Cochinitifer*, or *cochineal fig*. The insect feeds on other species of the cactus tribe; but this species is cultivated as its food, because it is less annoying by its prickles. It resembles the common prickly pear denuded of arms. On the top of this fruit grows a red flower: this, when the fruit is ripe, falls down on the top of it, and covers it so that no rain or dew can fall on the inside. A day or two after, the flower being scorched up by the heat of the sun, the fruit opens wide, and the inside appears full of red insects, (probably attracted by the fruit.) The Indians, when they perceive the fruit open, spread a large linen cloth, and then with sticks shake the plant, to disturb the insects so that they may take wing to be gone; but they keep hovering over the plant, till, by the heat, they fall dead on the cloth, where the Indians let them remain two or

three days, to dry. The cochineal insect is found in Mexico and Spain, and forms one of the most durable and rich of all purple dyes.

Before the end of the month, Eleanor and Sophia returned from New York. They did not regret leaving the city, to return to the country, although they had highly enjoyed their visit. They loved home so much, that it was only made more delightful by a short absence.

Frank, in looking over an old magazine, found some lines, which pleased him highly, and, having obtained permission to read them, he began in a stentorian voice : —

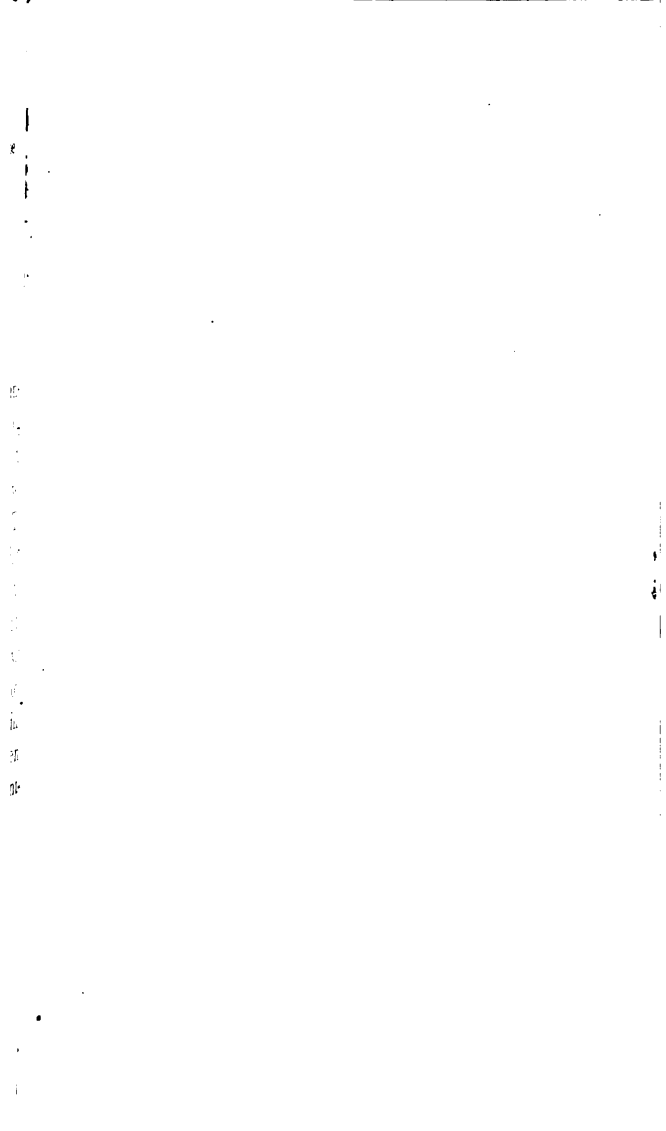
“ WINTER.

“ The mill-wheel’s frozen in the stream,
The church is decked with holly,
Mistletoe hangs from the kitchen beam,
To fright away melancholy !
Icicles clink in the milkmaid’s pail,
Younkers skate on the pool below,
Blackbirds fly from the storm and hail.
Hark ! how the cold winds blow !

“ There goes a man to shoot at snipe,
Here runs Dick to fetch a log ;

You'd think his breath was the smoke of a pipe
In the frosty morning fog.
Barney is breaking the ice for the kine,
Old and young cough as they go,
The round red sun forgets to shine,—
And hark ! how the cold winds blow !”

In following, even in this imperfect manner, the probable occupations of a family through the year, one cannot but be struck with the various sources of comfort and pleasure with which each season of the year abounds. The sketches of each month have been so short, that there was not room to speak of half the occupations and pleasures which each month, in its turn, can give. The history, however, will not have been written in vain, if any one finds himself excited by it to make more diligent use of the opportunities of improvement and pleasure which lie, more or less abundantly to be sure, within the reach of all.



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